The Unesco Courier

AUGUST 1980 – 3.50 french francs

# Nature and culture the human heritage

## Where the mountains of Montenegro sweep down to the sea

Photo J.-C. Berrier © Atlas, Paris

Along the Gulf of Kotor, a deep, winding inlet on the Adriatic coast of Montenegro (Yugoslavia), a chain of historic towns and villages lies at the foot of steep limestone mountains. The development of these settlements was shaped by exceptionally favourable and unusual natural conditions which gave rise to abundant plant and marine life, including species rarely found elsewhere. A cross-roads of cultures, this region has played a decisive role in the evolution of architecture, painting and craftsmanship in the Balkans. The inclusion of Kotor, with its harmony between the works of nature and those of man, on the World Heritage List as a region "of outstanding universal value" is a fitting symbol of the interdependence of the natural and cultural heritage.

The Unesco Courier

A window open on the world

AUGUST 1980 33rd year

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**A selection in Braille is published quarterly in English, French and Spanish**

**Published monthly by UNESCO**
**The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

**Editorial, Sales and Distribution Offices**
Unesco, Place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris

**Subscription rates**
**1 year : 35 French Francs**
**2 years: 58 FF**
**Binder for a year's issues: 29 FF**

The **UNESCO COURIER** is published monthly (11 issues a year including one double issue). For list of distributors see inside back cover.

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**The Unesco Courier is produced in microform (microfilm and/or microfiche) by: (1) University Microfilms (Xerox). Ann Arbor, Michigan 48100, U.S.A.; (2) N.C.R. Microcard Edition, Indian Head, Inc., 111 West 40th Street, New York, U.S.A.; (3) Bell and Howell Co., Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, Ohio 44691, U.S.A.**

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ISSN 0041-5278
N° 7-1980-OPI-80-1-367-A

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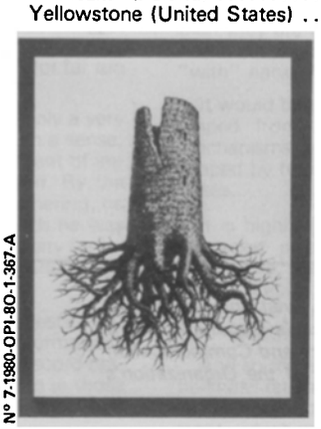
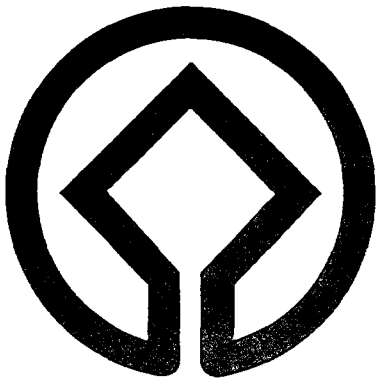


## Cover

**The roots of human existence are at stake in the conservation of the natural world and the preservation of the cultural masterpieces we have inherited from our forebears. It is now accepted that these roots, the "universal heritage" to which all mankind is heir, are implanted in the earth and extend to all cultures, past and present. Cover shows *Almayer's Folly*, a work by the Belgian artist René Magritte symbolizing the roots of the human heritage.**

Engraving René Magritte from *Le Lien de Paille* 1969
© Editions Georges Visat, Paris



The World Heritage emblem symbolizes the interdependence of cultural and natural properties.

# nature and culture the human heritage

This special issue of the *Unesco Courier* presents the first fifty-seven entries on the World Heritage List of cultural and natural "properties" recognized by the international community as of outstanding universal value. The list has been drawn up by an international committee on the basis of proposals submitted by the States (fifty-three so far) which are party to a major international agreement, the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which was adopted by the General Conference of Unesco in 1972. The Convention, which came into force in December 1975, has been welcomed all over the world as a new departure in international co-operation. It sets up a system whereby the international community can participate actively in protecting those parts of the cultural and natural heritage which have great universal value. Traditionally, the preservation of the cultural heritage and the conservation of nature have been regarded as two quite different problems, with responsibility for the protection of important cultural or natural sites being considered to lie exclusively with the country in which they are located. Where the Convention breaks new ground is in linking together the protection of the cultural heritage and the natural heritage and in providing a permanent framework—legal, administrative and financial—for international co-operation in this protection. It also introduces the specific notion of a "world heritage" whose importance transcends all political or geographical boundaries. In addition to the World Heritage List, the committee is also establishing a "List of World Heritage in Danger", featuring property for the protection of which major operations are necessary. The World Heritage Committee is provided with "muscle" to take firm action by Article 15 of the Convention which sets up a "World Heritage Fund" financed in part by contributions from the States party to the Convention and in part from other, voluntary sources. Technical assistance through the Fund has already been provided to a number of States adhering to the Convention.

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# The international convention

**by Gérard Bolla**

THE Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage came into being against a background of changing attitudes reflected by three symbolic events of the early 1970s.

The first was the completion in Upper Egypt and the Sudan of the first stage of the international campaign to save the monuments of Nubia, the most important archaeological rescue operation the world has ever seen. The fact that international solidarity made it possible to preserve the temples of Nubia for posterity gave substance to an idea implicit in Unesco's Constitution – the idea that the nations bear a collective responsibility towards monuments whose importance is such that they belong to the history of all mankind.

The second event was the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held at Stockholm in 1972, at which the international community stressed the urgent need for measures to conserve the natural environment, as well as the works of man's creative genius. Here too was an affirmation of the idea of the collective responsibility of the nations towards an environment in danger.

Thirdly, the peoples of the developing and industrialized countries alike voiced the strong conviction that their cultural identity should be strengthened and respected. The most tangible and often the highest forms of this cultural identity consist of the heritage of monuments and buildings produced by the creative spirit of the ancestors and the natural environment in which the nation achieved its fullest self-expression. It was felt that, while it is for each country to preserve its cultural identity, it is incumbent on them all – in the name of collective international responsibility – to join in the task of conservation.

And so an international agreement which was originally intended only to lay the foundations for mutual assistance in safeguarding the cultural heritage of monuments and buildings was transformed, in response to the wishes of those concerned with the protection of the human environment as a whole, into an instrument whose goal is the protection of monuments and natural sites, such as national parks.

Wishing to contribute to the strengthening of cultural identities, the architects of the Convention also provided that a list of monuments and sites should be drawn up, incorporating all cultural and natural property recognized by the international community as possessing universal value and hence as coming under its collective responsibility.

The system of international protection of cultural and natural property is thus firmly established; countries nominate such property for inclusion on the list but it is only accepted after a decision has been taken by a twenty-one-member international committee. If the need arises, the international community may contribute to the safeguard of the property by providing technical and financial assistance.

The inclusion of an archaeological site or a national park on the World Heritage List is usually a source of satisfaction and pride to those, the descendants of its creators or the custodians of its integrity, who have inherited the responsibility of preserving it. But inclusion on the List has serious implications for national and local authorities, which thereby pledge to resist with the utmost vigour any pressures that may be brought to bear by private interests, often with few scruples about respecting the cultural heritage of the past or the integrity of natural sites. Entries may in fact be removed, and a monument or national park may be divested of the honour of appearing on a list which enjoys high prestige and already includes some of the world's most precious treasures.

It is hard to imagine any public body failing to do its utmost to prevent the loss, possibly irremediable, of property which it has undertaken to preserve and for which it has requested the support of the entire international community.

The 1972 Convention on the Protection of the World Heritage has been described as "the peacetime Red Cross" for monuments and natural sites (another convention, the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, signed at The Hague in 1954, serves as a "war-time Red Cross" for monuments). Whatever we may think of the international system for the protection of cultural and natural property, whatever motives may have led States to adhere to it, this system now exists. As the years go by it will be strengthened as more States add their names to the fifty-three which, under Unesco's auspices, have already joined to form a great family determined to protect, in full solidarity, its most precious possessions.

# A new partnership in the making

**by Michel Batisse**

SOME people may be surprised to see the pyramids of Egypt and the national park of the Galapagos Islands incorporated within a single framework and inscribed on a single list. What can ancient monuments have in common with a group of rocky islands thronged with iguanas and tortoises? – except, perhaps, the equal ingenuity with which travel agencies arrange organized tours to each of these sites. But are the travel agents' efforts not proof that our contemporaries, when they have the opportunity, are attracted both by cultural masterpieces and by the wonders of nature?

What then is meant by this "common heritage of mankind"?

In addition to books, music, craft and artistry, the collections of paintings and sculptures in the world's museums, the cultural heritage comprises much "immovable" property such as monuments and groups of historic buildings. It is this "immovable" property with which the World Heritage Convention is concerned.

As for the natural heritage, it consists first of all of the plant and animal species whose conservation is of vital importance for human survival (see the "Unesco Courier", May 1980). These species are today protected as such by various (still extremely inadequate) conventions which deal notably with international trade in or hunting of them. But the natural heritage also includes unique sites, landscapes of exceptional beauty or of great value from the point of view of science or conservation, which can neither be replaced nor reproduced. It is this "immovable" natural heritage which is covered by the World Heritage Convention, although certain threatened plant and animal species are automatically protected when their habitat is chosen for inclusion on the World Heritage List.

But although the protection of cultural property and the protection of natural property may be parallel activities, they raise very different problems. In most countries the two functions are entrusted to separate administrative structures, and architects who, for example, are concerned with the preservation of historic buildings have little to do with the biologists who administer national parks. So the question of why nature and culture should now be brought together within a single international convention might well be countered by the point that they have been separated, and even treated as rivals, for far too long.

At the beginning of his long emergence, man was able to make only a very slight impact on his physical and biological environment. He was, in a sense, "within" nature. But as soon as he mastered fire he became the agent of important modifications, deliberate or accidental, in the natural world. By the end of the Palaeolithic age, when he still lived from hunting and gathering, he was already making an imprint on the natural environment in which he was pursuing his ascent. It is precisely this imprint, the result of his capacity for invention, that makes man what he is. What had yet to be called culture was already at odds with nature.

In Neolithic times, with the appearance of agriculture and the domestication of animals, the imprint would become deeper and the range of transformations would grow. Some 6,000 years ago, when man enters history, the discord between culture and nature was already etched on the face of the earth in those places where forests had been burned and where certain types of plants had been favoured to the exclusion of others.

But this was merely the modest beginning of a long process. The domination of the human species over every aspect of its environment would grow with its mastery of increasingly powerful tools, with its hunger for new objects, with the development of new needs, and with the multiplication of its members.

The material progress of techniques and societies took place essentially at the expense of nature and natural resources. And many philosophies and beliefs glorify this successful struggle of man "against" nature.

A tragic misunderstanding arose and persisted down the centuries: mankind's mastery of his own "animal nature" became confused with his wanton domination of the world around him. The warning of Francis Bacon, who announced at the dawn of the scientific revolution that "Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed", was ignored. The pre-eminence of mind over matter, which is the honour and the essence of man, was wrongly identified with a superiority that culture, especially in its technological forms, was considered to have over nature, thus confusing the moral order with the material order.

And so we reach the industrial revolution when the tempo quickens and matters come to a head. Industrial man has begotten prodigious technical achievements; he has gone some way to solving the problems of hunger and sickness. But at the same time his numbers grow to excess, he consumes relentlessly, he perfects lethal weaponry. His progress towards self-mastery is thus open to doubt.

Meanwhile, he has taken his conquest of nature so far that it is threatened with extinction. For nature the reckoning is too heavy: massive deforestation; the erosion and degradation of soils; the disappearance of animal and plant species; water, air, land and marine pollution of many kinds; proliferating slums and shantytowns; expanding concrete and asphalt; dwindling open spaces...

And yet the message is not hard to grasp. Will modern men realize in time that if they snap the umbilical cord which attaches them to the natural world then they are bound inexorably to destroy themselves? Will they turn to the healthiest sources of their different cultures and learn at long last how to live "with" nature?

It would be possible to cite many examples of the benefits man has skilfully reaped from the resources of the biosphere without endangering the mechanisms which give birth to these resources: the harmonious landscapes shaped by human toil, for instance, or the natural sites used for cultural purposes.

It is highly significant that the Convention already covers some of these privileged places where nature and culture meet: Ohrid and its lake in Yugoslavia, Tikal and its forest in Guatemala, Mont Saint-Michel and its bay in France. Let us hope that one day soon these sites will be joined by others of a similar kind, such as the tree-girdled temples of Angkor or the ruins of Machu Picchu in their grandiose Andean setting.

And so the association of nature and culture in the World Heritage Convention has first and foremost the value of a symbol – a symbol of the new alliance which must now be cemented between these two poles of human development, which only exists when they are combined.

## Tikal National Park, Guatemala ■

More than 3,000 architectural structures, including temples and stelae, ball-game courts, dams, canals and majestic highways, reveal the past splendour of Tikal, one of the most important religious centres of the Maya civilization. They also trace the history of the Mayas from the time when they lived by hunting and food-gathering (c. 600 BC) until the heyday of a complex society of farmers, priests, astronomers, architects and sculptors. The artistic styles and hieroglyphic writing created by the Mayas spread throughout Central America; and then, around 900 AD, the Maya civilization disappeared. An area of 576 km² surrounding the Ceremonial Centre of Tikal has been set aside as a national park for the protection of plant and animal life. Photo shows a temple (c. 700 AD) which rises almost 50 metres above Tikal's great square.

Photo R. Garraud-Unesco

## The City of Quito, Ecuador □

In the fifteenth century, seeking to consolidate the northern part of their great kingdom, the Tahuantinsuyo ("the four parts of the world") the Incas established their second capital at Quito on the slopes of a volcano, 2,800 metres above sea level. A century later, the same rugged site was covered by the churches, convents, spacious squares and university buildings of a Spanish colonial city, San Francisco de Quito. A seat of government and a major political and cultural centre, the city soon became distinguished for the quality of its artists. Architecture, sculpture and painting alike were such that the "School of Quito", in which indigenous traditions and European techniques were intermingled, is considered to be one of Latin America's outstanding contributions to world art. The capital of modern Ecuador, Quito is determined to preserve its historic centre, whose original layout of streets and squares closely follows that of the old colonial city. Photo shows richly decorated door in the church of El Sagrario.

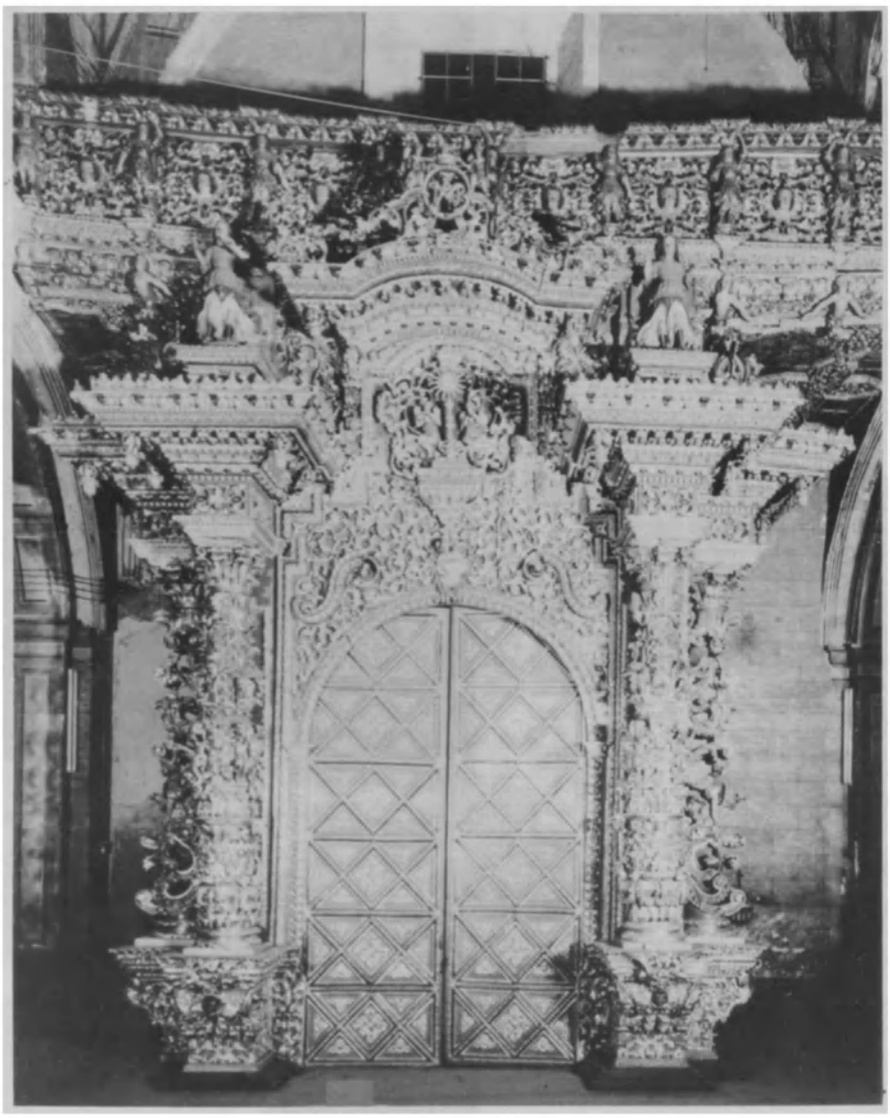


Photo © Salvat Editores, Barcelona, Spain

## Antigua Guatemala ●

In 1543, after previous attempts to establish a settlement there had been thwarted by the resistance of the Indians and by an avalanche from the slopes of the volcano Agua, the Spaniards founded the city of Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala. After earthquakes had reduced it to rubble in 1586, it was rebuilt, and along streets running north-south and east-west in straight lines rose churches, monasteries and palaces in which Gothic blended with a variety of styles inspired by the Italian Renaissance. After further earthquakes in 1717, the transfer of the city was envisaged but then a stubborn decision was taken to rebuild. Baroque and Ultra-baroque now came to the fore and ornately decorated columns and pilasters and animal and plant motifs in moulded stucco appeared. In 1751 the earth shook once more, partially destroying the city; in 1773 earthquake struck again. This time, Antigua Guatemala (the name by which the city had always been better known) was abandoned. Today the Guatemalan authorities, undeterred by the earthquakes of 1976, are endeavouring to preserve the remains of this beautiful, ill-fated city. Photo shows the façade of the church of San Francisco.

Photo © Explorer, Paris

Photo © Christian Zuber, Paris

## Galapagos Islands, Ecuador ○

Offspring of the volcanoes of the Pacific, a thousand kilometres from the continental mainland, the nineteen Galapagos Islands have a flora and fauna whose uniqueness has become more widely known in recent years. Giant tortoises, marine iguanas (in photo) and the birds which taught Charles Darwin the secrets of adaptation to the environment, peacefully welcome the large mammals—the sea lions and seals—which come ashore to breed. The first sailors who set foot on the islands, less than 500 years ago, were amazed that all the creatures there were harmless. Today, the Government of Ecuador, which took possession of the archipelago in 1831 and colonized it, is trying to put an end to hunting. But the protection of the islands' original ecosystem depends on the expulsion of all the creatures introduced by man, including dogs, monkeys, goats and pigs, as well as harmful insects.

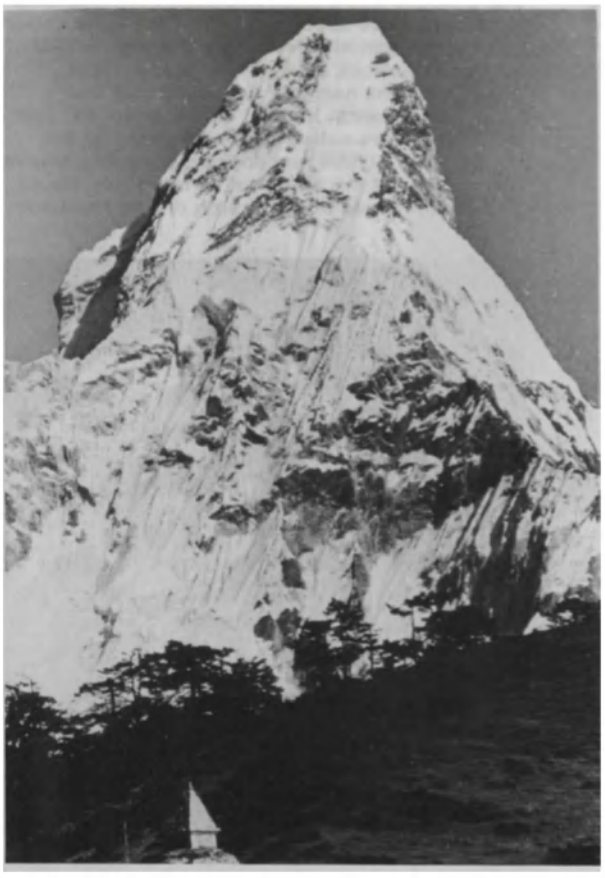


Photo © National Wildlife Project, Nepal

## The Valley of Kathmandu, Nepal ■

According to legend, the Kathmandu Valley was originally a lake at the foot of the Himalayas where the primordial form of the Buddha emerged from a golden lotus. Its cultural history began when the Bodhisattva Manjushri cleft open the lake's barrier with a blow of his sword and its waters flowed away. Although the early history of the Kathmandu Valley, from the time of the Kirati and Lichchavi dynasties 2,000 years ago until the Mallas of the fourteenth century, is shrouded in mystery, in every age Nepalese culture has succeeded in taking advantage of Nepal's location between Tibet and China in the north, and India in the south—between Buddhism and Hinduism. Out of the flourishing coexistence of these two religions came a unique blend of influences in architecture and the arts and a cultural blossoming whose apogee lasted three centuries from 1500 to 1800. The legacy of that period, now protected, comprises seven groups of buildings scattered over the valley: the royal squares of three large towns—Kathmandu, Patan and Bhadgaon (Bhaktapur)—and the sacred complexes of Swayambhu, Bodhnath, Pashaputi and Changu Narayan. These seven sites include a total of 132 buildings which the Government of Nepal wishes to safeguard in accordance with the Master Plan for Conservation which it has recently approved. Shown here, temples on Durbar Square, Patan.

Photo Paolo Koch © Rapho, Paris

## Sagarmatha National Park, Nepal □

The Nepalese prefer to call earth's highest mountain "Sagarmatha" ("Whose-head-touches-the-sky") rather than "Everest" after the British civil servant George Everest who saw it in the distance around 1840. Sagarmatha National Park includes the 8,848-metre-high peak, as well as six other mountains over 7,000 metres high. It also contains glaciers which feed the rivers that flow down through deep gorges to the Ganges river system. There were several reasons for establishing a park on the daunting slopes of the Himalayas. First, it had become necessary to protect the forest (the silver fir, the tree juniper, and the silver birch are in greater danger than the many varieties of rhododendron such as *Rhododendron arboreum*, Nepal's national flower) and its fauna (the musk deer, the snow leopard, the Himalayan black bear, the wolf and the lesser panda—animals which it is now forbidden to hunt). But equally vital was the protection of the culture of the Sherpas who began to come here from Tibet in the sixteenth century and now live within the perimeter of the Park. The Sherpas, who belong to the Myingmapa sect of Tibetan Buddhism, built temples and monasteries, the most remarkable of which is perched on a rocky spur some 4,000 metres up. Many other religious monuments are maintained and even still built by them: tomb-sanctuaries known as *chörtens* in and around the villages and along paths; rocks and *mani* walls of stone slabs engraved with inscriptions; white prayer flags and retreats high up the hill slopes, and water-driven prayer-mills in streams. For the Sherpas, who believe that compassion towards all living creatures is the root of perfection, Sagarmatha Park is sacred for spiritual as well as for ecological reasons.

Photo Marc Riboud © Magnum, Paris

## The ancient city of Damascus, Syria ●

Perhaps the most famous building in Damascus is the Omayyad mosque, built between 705 and 715 AD on the orders of caliph Walid I. But Damascus, thought to be the world's oldest capital, contains many other riches. The outer walls of the mosque are those of the Temple of Jupiter constructed in the third century AD under the emperors Septimius Severus and Caracalla on the site of another temple dating back to the eleventh century BC. The quarters clustered around the early Aramaean town show countless traces of the city's long history. The Islamic heritage is of course the richest, and the buildings (110 of which have been classified as historic monuments) are often in a good state of preservation if they are still being used—like most of the mosques, schools,mausoleums and other religious edifices. On the other hand, the condition of non-religious constructions such as hammams, souks and palaces is deteriorating, as is the urban fabric itself. The Syrian authorities hope to halt the ravages of "modernization" by subsidizing historical monuments, preserving the traditional activities of shopkeepers and craftsmen, and adapting the flow of traffic to the structure of the city.

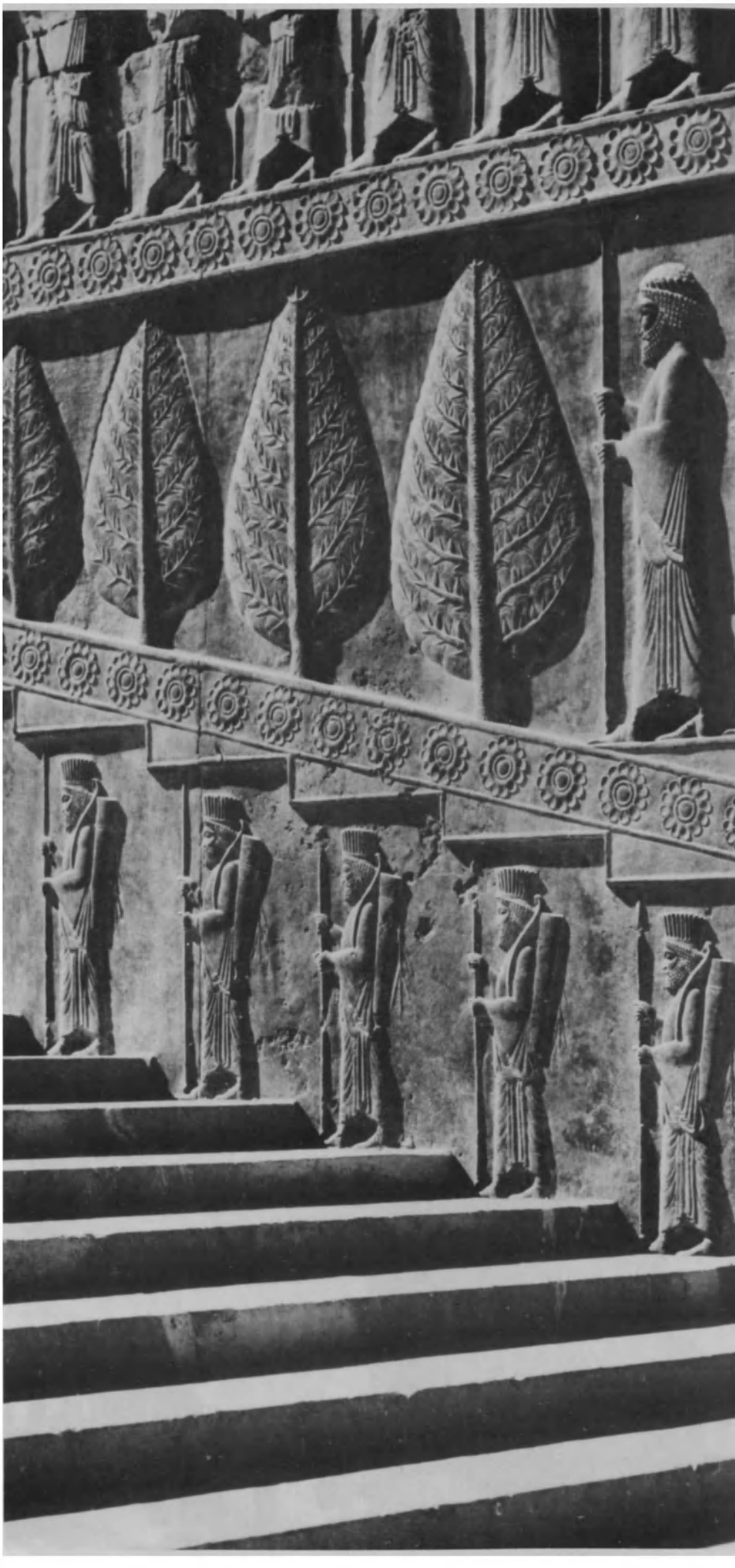


Photo © Henri Stierlin, Geneva

## Persepolis, Iran ■

When Darius the Great built a new capital on the arid plains of Fars, he wished to proclaim the power of his empire and his calling as a uniter of peoples: his rule then extended from the steppes of central Asia to the banks of the Nile, and from the Indus to the Danube. Work on the capital began in 518 BC and was continued over more than sixty years by his successors Xerxes and Artaxerxes. The result was Persepolis, an architectural complex of a sumptuousness the world has rarely seen. The bas-reliefs (see photo) lining the monumental stairway leading to the enormous audience hall known as the apadana attest to the grandeur of the Persian empire. Thirteen huge columns give an idea of the apadana's breathtaking size, even though the colossal capitals consisting of gryphon's heads and roaring lions which once supported the twenty-metre-high roof now lie in the dust. Darius, who was influenced by the teachings of Zoroaster, was the author of noble inscriptions which still survive. "I wish to think of justice for as long as I can", reads one of them. Once a dynastic capital into which flowed offerings and tribute from the "twenty-three peoples of the empire", a royal necropolis dedicated to the notion of universalism, Persepolis had few inhabitants left by 330 BC when Alexander burnt it to the ground.

Photo © Henri Stierlin, Geneva

## Meidan-e Shah (Royal Square), Isfahan, Iran □

Isfahan, in the centre of Iran, was already a large city when the Safavid Shah Abbas the First transferred his capital there in the late sixteenth century, but he turned it into a place of such beauty that it became known as *Nesfe Jahan* ("Half the World"). His most remarkable innovation was the Royal Square, a piece of town planning whose like had never before been seen in the Muslim cities of Iran, where the only airy, open spaces amidst the serried ranks of buildings were in the courtyards of the caravanserais and the biggest mosques. A rectangle surrounded by a double row of barrel-vaults *(iwan)*, the Square is 500 metres long and 165 metres wide. It was used for processions, military parades, and games of polo. Four superb buildings decorated with murals and brilliant enamelled tiles stand symmetrically around the Square: the Royal Mosque; the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (the sovereign's private oratory); the Ali Qapu ("the lofty gate") Palace, which led from the Square to other palaces surrounded by gardens; and the gateway to the Qeyssariyeh, where each evening the crowds were entertained by a concert. Photo shows aerial view of the Royal Mosque.

## Tchogha Zanbil, Iran ●

The site of Tchogha Zanbil is located in southwestern Iran, north of the city of Ahwaz and not far from ancient Susa, on the edge of a plateau overlooking the Ab-e Diz river and surrounded by tamarind forests. The complex consists of three concentric mud-brick walls. The first encloses a large cistern, three palaces, five underground tombs and a shrine dedicated to the fire-god Nusku. Seven temples stand within the second wall, and three more within the third. In the centre of the whole complex is a twenty-five-metre-high ziggurat, or storeyed tower (it was originally twice as high). It consists of a mud-brick core covered with a facing of fired bricks, many of which bear cuneiform inscriptions in the Elamitic language. The complex was created by King Untash Napirisha, who ruled from 1265 to 1245 BC. The city, known as Dur Untashi (the city of Untash) was still unfinished when its founder died and for the next six hundred years, until the Assyrian invasion led by Assurbanipal around 640 BC, its only inhabitants were priests.

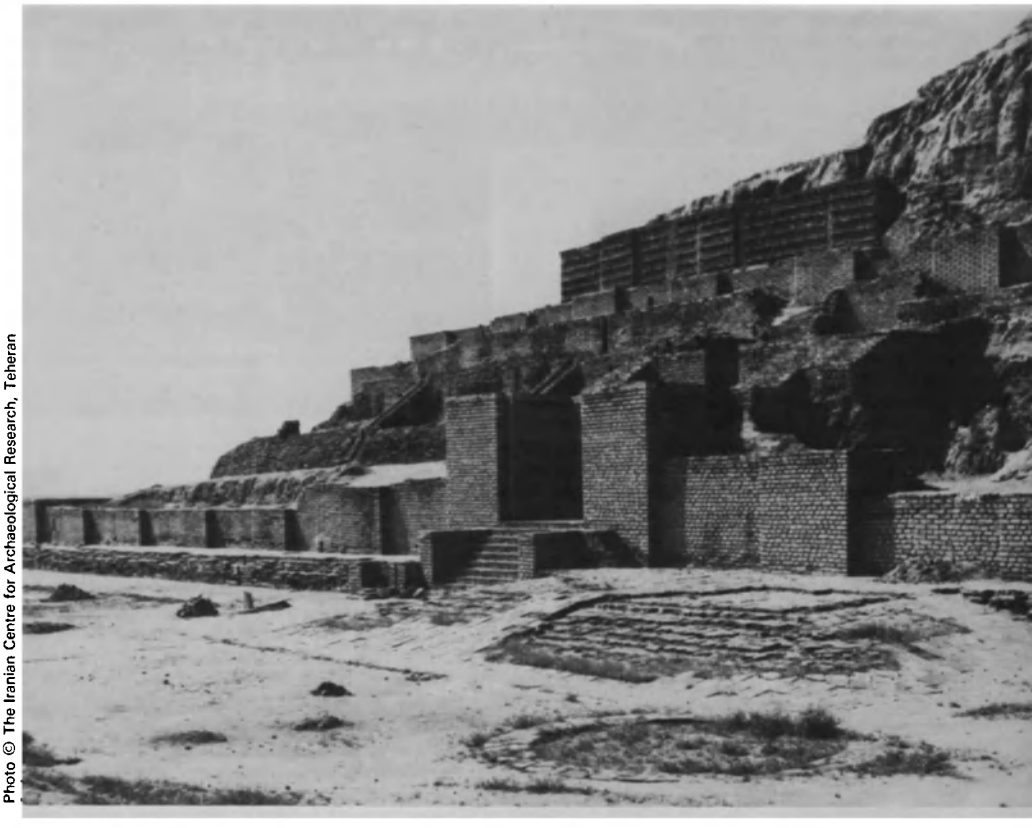


Photo © The Iranian Centre for Archaeological Research, Teheran

## Nahanni National Park, Canada ○

The regular meanders of the Flat River; the 290-kilometre-long canyon carved out of the Cordillera by its sibling, the South Nahanni; cave-like frost pockets; piping sinkholes; hundred-metre-high waterfalls; granitic peaks; hot springs; underground rivers and deep caves such as the Grotte Valérie with its multi-hued stalactites and stalagmites; the Grande Galérie de Glace, incrusted with intricate crystals of ice; and the Galérie des Moutons Morts which contains the skulls and skeletons of sheep which perished several thousand years ago... these are some of the natural wonders of Nahanni National Park, in the Canadian Northwest. Species which live in the park are typical of Boreal forest and Alpine tundra ecosystems. Nahanni's 4,770 km² are the home of some 500 species of vascular plants, more than 260 species of bryophytes, 170 species of birds (including the rare and endangered Peregrine Falcon and the Golden Eagle) and over 40 mammal species including Dall's Sheep, Caribou, Grey Wolf and Grizzly Bear. Photo shows the Gate and Pulpit Rock in Nahanni's Third Canyon.

Photo © Parks Canada

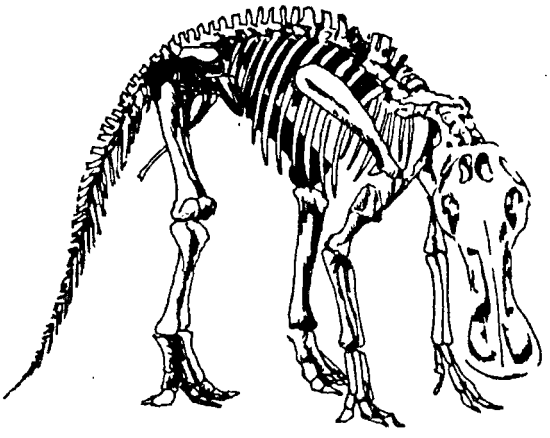
## Kluane National Park, Canada and Wrangell-St. Elias National Monument, USA □

The world's largest nature reserve lies on both sides of the L-shaped frontier that separates Alaska from the Yukon Territory of Canada. In jointly nominating the area for inclusion on the World Heritage List, the Governments of the USA and Canada declared that "the Kluane National Park and Wrangell-St. Elias National Monument are... a joint resource which remains intact as an unbroken natural system... (and) which we believe possesses World Heritage significance". It would be hard to disagree. The region is a huge chain of glaciers, many of which are still advancing, in a mountain system which has twelve peaks over 4,500 metres. Under the pressures caused by plate tectonics, the mountains move and grow. Earthquakes are common; volcanoes abound; hot springs burst out of the earth. Over thirty major rivers, carrying immense loads of silt and rocks scraped by the glaciers from the mountain walls, ceaselessly make and unmake terraces, plains and deltas. Photo shows the Nabesna Glacier in northern part of Wrangell-St. Elias National Monument.

Photo M. Woodbridge Williams © National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

## Dinosaur Provincial Park, Canada ■

In the south-west corner of the Canadian province of Alberta, the eroded badlands are a geologist's dream of fantastically shaped rock-piles, mesas, buttes, knife-edge divides and other dramatic features. The meandering Red Deer River carves out terraces of lush vegetation, providing habitats for birdlife of remarkable variety and abundance. In winter the mild micro-climate attracts such animals as the pronghorn antelope, the mule and the whitetail deer. Seventy million years ago, under a different climate, the great reptiles flourished there. Between 1910 and 1917 there was a veritable "Dinosaur Rush" to the Red Deer River Valley, as palaeontologists uncovered fossil remains of some sixty different species, establishing the area as the most extensive dinosaur fossil deposit known. More than 300 major specimens, representing all the known families of these vanished monsters, were extracted from a twenty-four-kilometre stretch of the Red Deer River. Many are now preserved in the great natural history museums of North America and Europe. (See also back cover).



Drawing © Alberta Recreation Parks and Wildlife, Parks Division, Canada

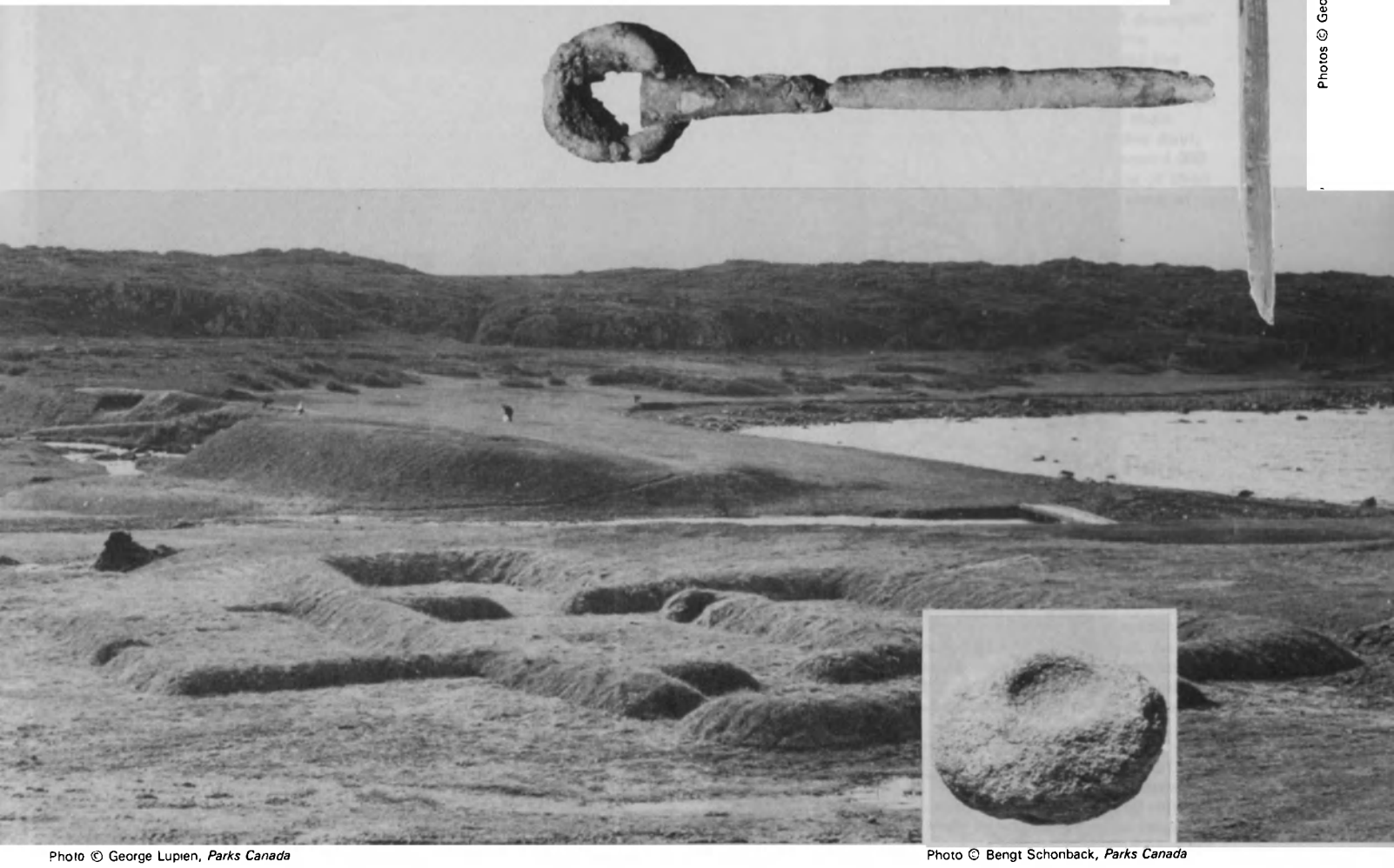


Photo © George Lupien, *Parks Canada*

Photos © George van Der Vlugt, *Parks Canada*



Photo © Bengt Schonback, *Parks Canada*

## L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Park, Canada ●

Ever since the publication of the medieval Icelandic manuscripts that contain the Vinland sagas, many people tried, in the face of widespread scepticism, to prove that the lands discovered by the Norsemen on their adventurous voyages westward and to which they gave such enigmatic names, were on the coast of North America. Then, twenty years ago, Norse remains were discovered at l'Anse aux Meadows (or l'Anse du Midi) on the shore of Epaves Bay in northern Newfoundland (above). On a narrow terrace lying between two bogs and crossed by a small brook, archaeologists found vestiges of three large dwellings, a smithy, and four workshops. The buildings were thick-walled structures of turf with steeply sloping turf roofs supported by wooden frames. Floors were of tamped earth or sand; the hearths were of stone. Excavations have yielded slag and a quantity of iron artefacts, together with objects in bronze, bone and stone, all of Scandinavian origin. Inset, stone oil lamp of Norse type. Radiocarbon dating indicates that the remains are from the eleventh century AD. Four hundred years before Columbus, l'Anse aux Meadows was the site of the first meeting between Europeans whose voyage had brought them via Greenland from Iceland, and inhabitants of the New World—the Beothuck Eskimos. Horizontal to photo, ring-headed bronze pin of Viking Age Type. Vertical, wooden floorboard from a small Norse boat.

## Independence Hall, USA ■

In 1732, Andrew Hamilton, a prominent attorney, undertook with the help of master builder Edmund Woolley the construction in Philadelphia of a large redbrick building in the English Classical style. He wished to provide a dignified setting for the deliberations of the Pennsylvania Assembly. The product of this enterprise is one of the world's best preserved and most lovingly maintained historic buildings. It was the scene of the Second Continental Congress in 1775, whose debates laid the foundations of an independent United States. It was here that George Washington was chosen as Commander-in-Chief, and within its walls the Declaration of Independence was adopted and signed. Here too, in 1787, delegates signed the Constitution which would serve as a model on every continent, and which is the earliest document of its kind. Every year some four million visitors pass through the rooms of Independence Hall and beneath the steeple built in 1753 to house the famous Liberty Bell which bears the inscription, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof".

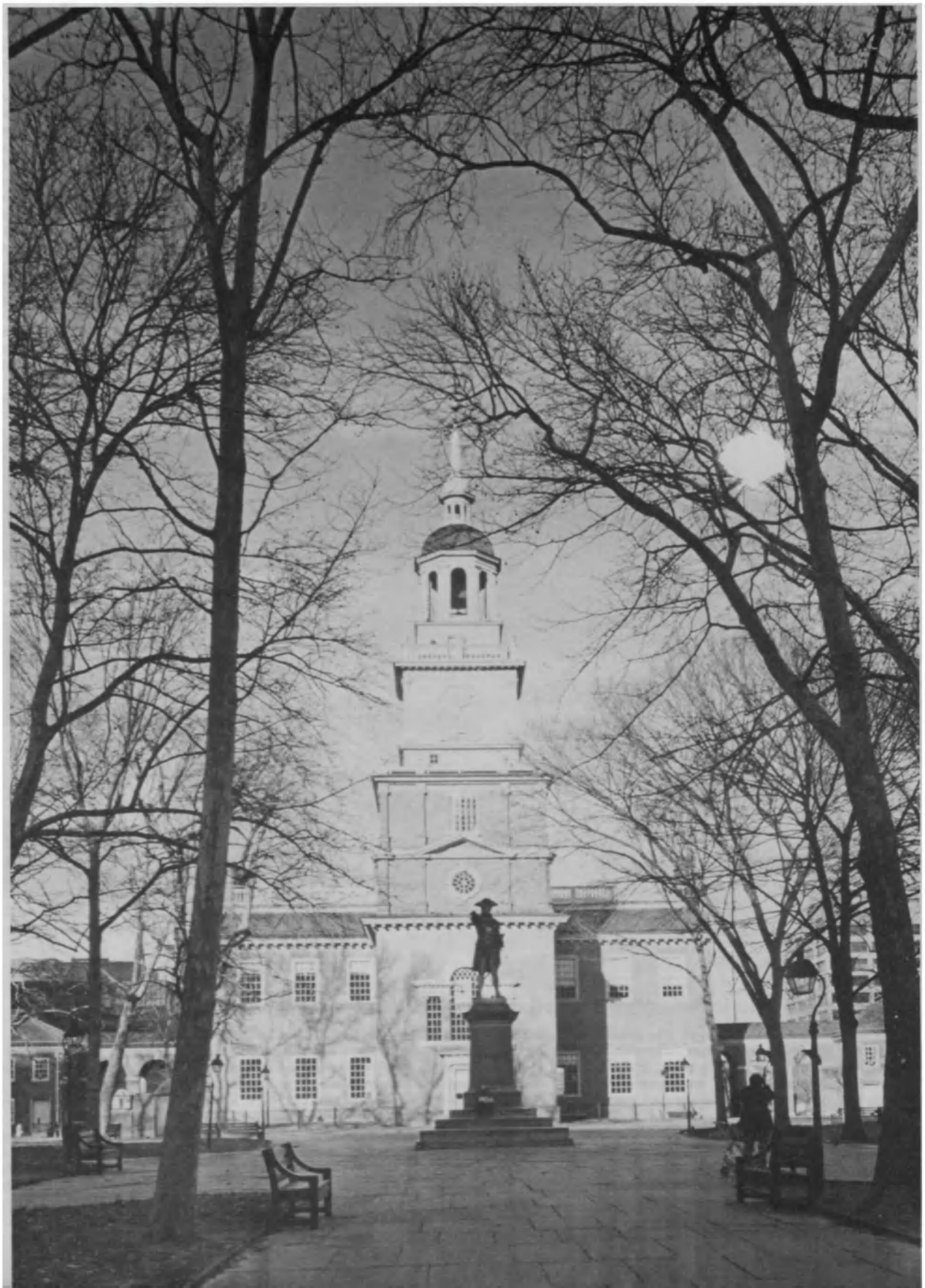


Photo Richard Frear © National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

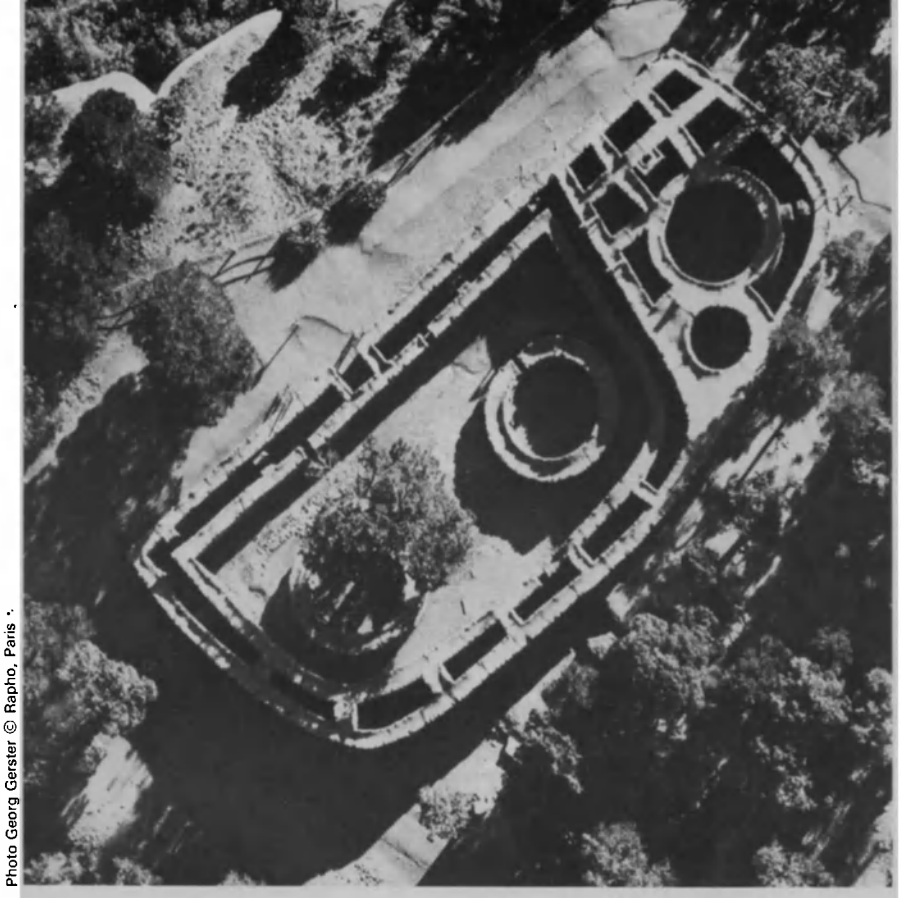


Photo Georg Gerster © Rapho, Paris

## Mesa Verde National Park, USA □

In southwestern Colorado, a "green table" covered with pinyon pine and juniper and dissected by deep canyons slopes gently from north to south at an altitude of between 2,600 and 1,800 metres. In the sixth century AD an Indian people known as the Anasazi established camps there and built semi-subterranean houses, cultivated maize, beans and squash, and raised turkeys and hunting-dogs. Their society underwent rapid change. Between 700 and 1100 AD, they built villages on the high, flat lands. Their houses were made of wood, stone and mud, and arranged in compact "L" or "U" shapes facing a central courtyard. Circular underground chambers called *kivas,* which were used for religious activities, were placed near the rows of houses or within the courtyards. As the population increased, techniques of architecture, pottery-making and cotton weaving became more sophisticated, and farming methods improved. The Anasazi built terraces and dug reservoirs and irrigation ditches. And then, suddenly, in the thirteenth century, the situation changed dramatically. Settlements on flat land were abandoned in favour of villages built in cliff caves, some of which could only be reached by ladder. Was the soil exhausted? Was there a period of drought? Was the population attacked by the ancestors of the Ute Indians, or did the society break up as result of internal quarrels? Whatever the reason, the Anasazi moved away to the south (where their descendants the Pueblos live to this day), leaving in the Mesa Verde, in almost 4,000 archaeological sites, the testimony of their early history. Shown here, aerial view of the Sun Temple.

Photo Ernst Haas © Magnum, Paris

## Yellowstone National Park, USA ●

In the early nineteenth century, the fur trappers and gold prospectors who ventured into the mysterious wilderness of north-west Wyoming brought back near-incredible stories: they had seen fountains of boiling water, thundering waterfalls and a great lake full of enormous trout. As a result, three expeditions were organized between 1869 and 1871, and discovered the truth to be even stranger than those early travellers' tales. The landscape of Yellowstone, which almost defies description, is an unfinished history of volcanic evolution. Twenty-seven forests, buried by eruptions of ash some 50 million years ago, have been preserved in fossil form. Hundreds of hot springs and geysers spurt between the toes of the mountains. Lava formation accounts for most of Yellowstone's waterfalls, the best known of which are to be found between the precipitous and many-hued walls of the river's canyon. If the wonders of the site explain the almost religious awe which it inspired in the early American discoverers, the consequences were no less remarkable. In 1872, the United States Congress set aside the whole area amounting to some 9,000 km² as a "Public park or pleasuring-ground". For the first time in history, a Government decided to leave in its natural state, and to protect in perpetuity, a vast territory, with its rivers, its lakes, its forests and its animal life.

Photo © Division of International Affairs, U.S. Park Service, Washington, D.C.

## Grand Canyon National Park, USA ●

When the majestic Colorado River passes through Arizona, the curtain rises on one of geology's most dramatic spectacles. Here horizontal layers of the earth's crust were lifted to a height of 2,500 metres above sea level, then gouged out by watercourses which transported thousands of tons a day towards the sea. Today the Grand Canyon is a great gash, 1,500 metres deep, 440 kilometres long, and between 200 metres and thirty kilometres wide. Within its walls we have a view of geologic time that covers two thousand million years. Each of the great eras into which geologists have divided the history of the earth, from Precambrian to Cenozoic, is represented. Almost all the earth's climatic life zones exist and the various environments support life in abundance: from desert life forms low down near the river, to the conifer forest communities on the rims and the Alpine zone on the topmost peaks nearby.

Photo © John Green, Amherst, USA

## Everglades National Park, USA ■

A paradise of orchids, the Everglades—once described as a "River of Grass"—are also the home of a strange fraternity of tropical and temperate trees: ash and palm, mulberry and gumbo limbo, oak and mangrove. Part of a shallow basin, the Park covers an area of 567,000 hectares on the southern tip of Florida. It provides a sanctuary for sixty reptile species (the American Alligator has survived there; the American Crocodile struggles to do so) and the last refuge of the Florida Panther, the Manatee and the Florida Black Bear. There are huge colonies of storks, ibis and herons. Water, in the form of rainfall or overflow from Lake Okeechobee, is perhaps the most important factor in the composition of plant life in the Everglades, blurring the lines of the landscape and creating subtle biological harmonies. The Park lies at the interface between temperate and sub-tropical America; between fresh and brackish water; between the vast urban sprawl of Miami and the wilderness. (Left) Roseate spoonbill.

## Virunga National Park, Zaire ●

Located almost entirely in the Kivu region of Zaire, Virunga National Park is a place of extraordinary diversity, stretching from marshy deltas through vast savannah, lava plains and volcanic mountains up to the eternal snows of Mount Ruwenzori more than 5,000 metres above sea level (below). Beside its rivers and lakes are found some of the biggest concentrations of wild mammals in the world, including 20,000 hippopotami. Gorillas still live in its mountains. The White Nile has its source there in the fabled "Mountains of the Moon", so that Egypt is in a sense a "gift of Virunga". Siberian birds winter in Virunga. A source of pride to the people of Zaire, this national park which has been threatened more than once by foreign poachers, is constantly patrolled by guards from the *Institut Zairois pour la Conservation de la Nature* ; more than thirty of them have given their lives in its defence.

## Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania ■

Between two immense national parks, Tanzania has established a conservation area so large that it could easily fit in two or three nations from other continents. Centred on the Ngorongoro Crater, the area covers some 81,000 square kilometres and contains many other craters which are among the largest in the world. From the edge of Empakaai Crater, which is now the site of a deep lake, the active volcanoes of Mount Oldonyo Leng'ai can be seen. The protection of natural resources—water, soil, plants and animals—is the priority task of the authorities who have succeeded in reaching arrangements with the Masai herdsmen who live there but who have to wage an unrelenting struggle against poachers in order to save threatened animal species such as the panther, the rhinoceros and the hippopotamus. But the best-known site in the area is the Olduvai Gorge, famed for the discovery of the skull of man's most remote ancestor.

Photo © CAT-C.E.D.R.I., Paris

Photo Georg Gerster © Rapho, Paris

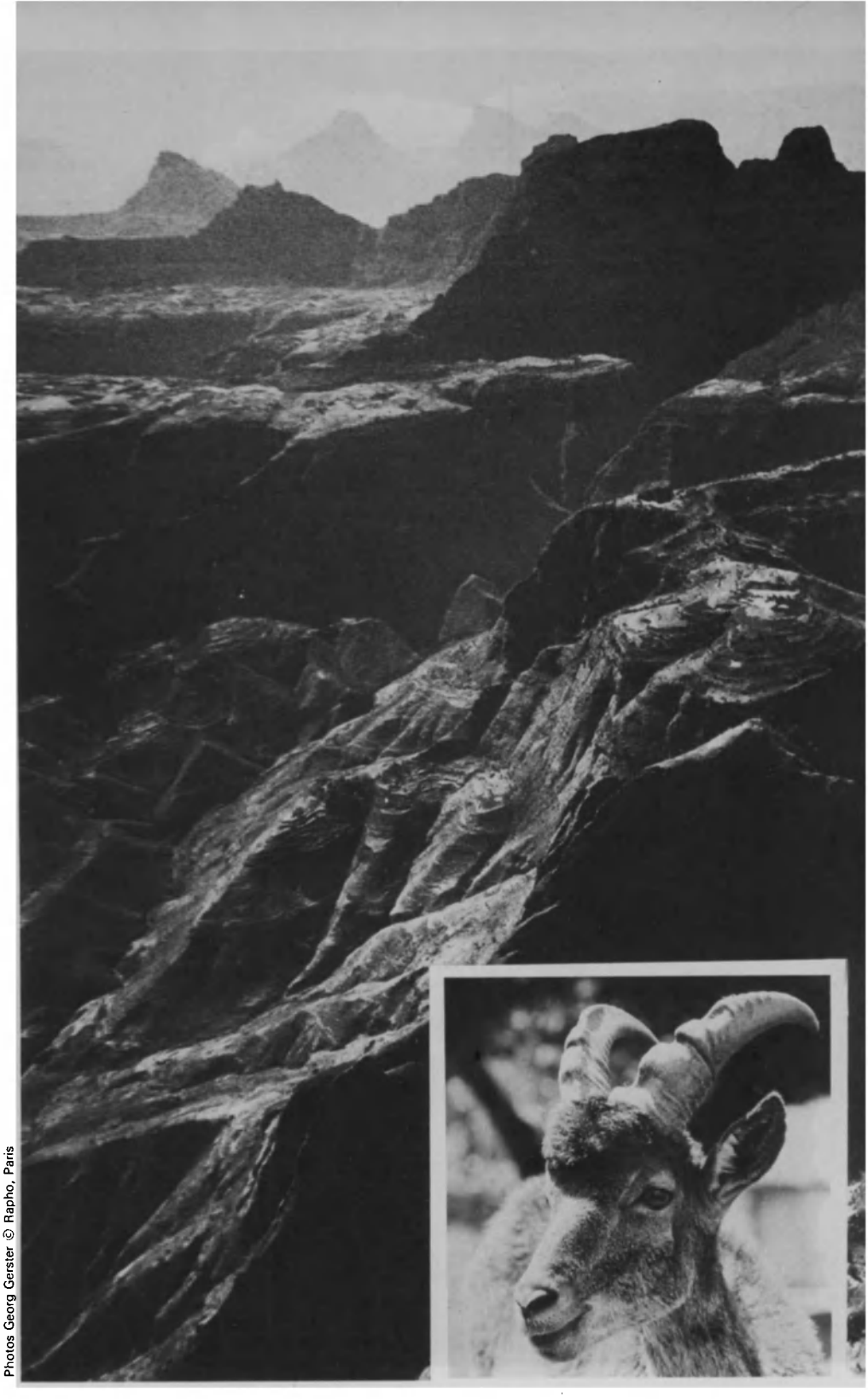
## Forts and Castles in the Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western Regions of Ghana □

The coast of the Republic of Ghana boasts a remarkable series of forts and castles of all sizes, some in ruins, others well preserved. They are not the vestiges of conquest or exploration. They were built to protect trade—mainly the trade in gold. The Portuguese, who sought to hold the monopoly of trade with the country which would later be called the Gold Coast, built the first castles towards the end of the fifteenth century; Elmina Castle (left) dates from 1482. A hundred years later their rivals began to construct their own forts on every promontory and at every river mouth that seemed likely to provide protection for their ships and aid their dealings with the local population. The Dutch, the British, the Danes, the Germans and the Swedes all built forts—some forty in all. The castles changed hands several times, usually with the aid of African chiefs who rented, lent or sold the land they were built on and profited from the transit of merchandise—first of all gold, then timber, ivory, cotton goods, palm oil and slaves. After the abolition of the slave trade, the British bought forts from the Danes in 1850, and from the Dutch in 1872. Today the Government of Ghana occupies the vast premises of Christiansborg Castle in Accra. Elmina Castle houses a police training college, while the fortress of Cape Coast has been turned into a history museum and research centre. Seven other forts are used to accommodate tourists.

Photo Frank Johnson © Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, Accra

## Simien National Park, Ethiopia ■

The mountains in the northwest of the Ethiopian plateau are famed for their splendour. Erosion on a massive scale has gouged out deep gorges and chiselled peaks and precipitous cliffs, some with a sheer drop of 1,500 metres. The region, known as Simien, harbours animals that are now very rare in Africa, such as the Ethiopian ibex *(Walia ibex)* (inset), the lion-maned Gelada baboon, and species of the Simien fox which have no other habitat. It was chiefly to protect these species that the Simien National Park was created in 1969. Unfortunately, it is in danger. Local farmers are using it as grazing land for their livestock, excessive cultivation is eroding the shallow soils, and in the dry season fires started by these farmers sweep up the cliff faces, devastating tree, bush and grass cover. These factors combined constitute a serious threat to the survival of the Walia and the Simien fox. The authorities are proposing to resettle the farmers on more fertile and less fragile soil outside the park.



Photos Georg Gerster © Rapho, Paris

Photo Georg Gerster © Rapho, Paris

## Fasil Ghebbi Gondar Region, Ethiopia ●

Gondar became the permanent capital of Ethiopia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (before then the Court had followed the king from place to place as he moved around his realm) and today efforts are being made to preserve the castles and monuments of this "Gondar period" of Ethiopian history. The first of these is the Castle of Emperor Fassilides (1632-1667), a massive square building of black stone, with four round corner towers topped by small cupolas, and a fifth quadrangular crenellated tower overlooking the ensemble. Within, the apartments and reception rooms have survived, though now stripped of the sumptuous fittings described by

contemporary visitors. The other, smaller castles display a number of architectural innovations, such as architraves, cornices and stone frames. Other monuments of the Gondar period include the Chancellery of Tzadich Yohannes, a lions' den, a wedding house, the small palace of Queen Mentuab, arcades, the houses of dignitaries and guards, and churches where the King attended mass every day. Some aspects of the complex call to mind the fortified rural dwellings of Arabia. But the effect is Ethiopian, even if the building methods used were influenced by the Portuguese. Left, the castle of Fassilides.

Photo Georg Gerster © Rapho, Paris

## Rock-hewn churches, Lalibela, Ethiopia □

For hundreds of years, the inhabitants of several Ethiopian provinces built churches in caves or shrines hollowed out of cliff faces, leaving visible only a decorated façade reminiscent of the tombs in Petra, Jordan. But later on (probably in the early thirteenth century) Ethiopian craftsmen produced a remarkable accomplishment of engineering and architecture by hewing entire churches out of the living rock. The buildings—blocks of stone fifty to 100 square metres in area first set apart from the pink tufa soil, then hollowed out and decorated both inside and outside—look exactly as if they were built with separate stones, but each of them is a single hewn and sculpted rock. The best-known are the eleven churches of the holy city of Lalibela, which was once used as a capital by the king who gave it its name. Each church has its own distinctive layout, proportions, style, bas-reliefs and wall paintings (above). The group of buildings, virtually invisible against the vast landscape dominated by Mount Abouna Joseph, is laid out according to a secret religious pattern based on the topography of Palestine or of a new Jerusalem, with each church being thought to represent a stage in the life of Christ.

Photo Du Bois © Atlas Photo, Paris

## Islamic Cairo, Egypt ■

When, less than twenty years after the Hegira, the Arabs entered Egypt as champions of a new faith, Islam, they settled at some distance from existing cities. Their first capital was the camp called al-Fustat (the Tent), which they set up north of Memphis, under the walls of an ancient Roman fort. Then two centuries later, Ahmad Ibn Tulun built a residential quarter around the beautiful Mosque which still bears his name. Another hundred years went by, and then, in 969 AD, a little further downstream on the eastern bank of the Nile, the city of al-Qáhira (Cairo the Victorious) was founded. From then onwards, as a commercial, cultural and theological centre, Cairo developed into the greatest Islamic city of the Middle Ages. Today, the city contains some 600 registered historical monuments of great value, including mosques, colleges, churches and monasteries, military buildings, palaces and bazaars. The architectural wealth of historic Cairo is enhanced by the fact that much of the early urban fabric remains intact; all the successive "cities" of Cairo, from its foundation up to the nineteenth century, have been preserved. Above, the Ibn Tulun mosque (See also back cover).

Photo © Documentation Centre for Ancient Egypt, Cairo

## Open Air Museum of Nubia and Aswan, Egypt □

The monuments of Nubia are now familiar to the whole world, thanks to the success of the international campaign launched by Unesco in 1960. The names of Abu Simbel and Philae evoke not only the technical triumphs of their rescue from the rising Nile, but also the beauty of the great temples of Ramses II, hewn out of the cliffs in the thirteenth century BC, and of the island of sanctuaries, where the Nubians worshipped the goddess Isis until 552 AD. But other shrines and monuments were rescued during the campaign, such as Amada, with its temples from the fifteenth and thirteenth centuries BC; or Kalabsha built during the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus. A number of buildings and sites which were not threatened by the waters of the High Dam are also included in what is a unique "open-air museum": monuments to Egyptian officials of the third and second millennia which illustrate the importance of Aswan as a frontier city and the point of departure for military and commercial expeditions to the south. The monastery of St. Simeon (tenth-eleventh centuries AD), and Islamic cemeteries of the twelfth and eleventh centuries, are more recent milestones in Nubia's religious history. Left, detail of a colossus from the temple of Gerf Hussein.

Photo Erich Lessing © Magnum, Paris

## Ancient Thebes with its Necropolis, Egypt ●

In the second millennium BC, the city of Thebes, now hidden beneath the modern town of Luxor, became the capital not only of a reunited Egypt, freed from the invader's rule, but also of a great Empire which stretched as far as the Euphrates. Thebes devoted its wealth to the construction of temples. The two immense temple precincts of Karnak and Luxor, two-and-a-half kilometres apart, were linked by an avenue lined with statues of rams, partly excavated in recent years. Two thousand years ago, travellers from Asia, Greece and Italy came, like the tourists of today, to admire the Great Temple of Amon, the city's chief god, which the priest-architects were constantly extending. The bas-reliefs and pillared courts of Luxor reflect the aesthetic refinement of the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC, from Amenophis III to Ramses II. Across the Nile from Luxor and Karnak, the richly decorated galleries of royal and private tombs hewn out of the rock depict with a wealth of illustration the beliefs, historical events and daily life of the period. Perhaps an even more moving sight is the village which for centuries housed generations of masons and artists, and whose surviving dwellings reveal how these anonymous workers lived as they created monuments for kings and gods. Photo shows interior of the burial chamber of Sennufer.

Photo John G. Ross © Rapho, Paris

## The Pyramid Fields from Giza to Dahshur, Egypt ○

Founded after the unification of the kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt, 5,000 years ago, Memphis was the capital of united Egypt until 2150 BC. It subsequently remained an important military, administrative and above all religious centre, where Alexander the Great and his successors were crowned as pharaohs. Hardly anything is left of the great city except for a few colossal statues, the remains of a temple and the embalming house of the sacred Apis bulls. The grandest and best-preserved monuments are the vast pyramid fields to the north and south of the site. These cemeteries include the pyramids of kings Cheops, Chephren and Mycerinus at Giza (see photo); sun-temples at Abu Ghurah and Abu Sir; pyramid complexes belonging to ten other kings and richly decorated tombs of the aristocracy at Saqqarah; monuments to Snofru and jewel-packed tombs at Dahshur... No monuments in the world are more famous; and for twentieth-century archaeologists the treasures of Memphis are still far from exhausted.

## Abu Mena, Egypt ◇

In 296 AD, a group of Christians brought home a dead soldier from the distant shores of the Black Sea, and laid his body to rest in the Mariut desert, west of Alexandria and not far from a bubbling spring. Abu Mena, or St. Menas, was an Egyptian serving in the Roman army, who had been martyred after proclaiming his Christian faith. Soon, miracles occurred at his burial place; the spring water proved to have healing powers. A church was built there, and then a monastery, more churches, pilgrims' rest-houses, ovens, and public baths. For 400 years, the humble settlement was a centre of pilgrimage of such renown that in the early fifth century the Emperor Arcadius built there a great basilica, with three naves and fifty-six marble columns. The surviving ruins, which include press-houses, workshops (where phials were made for the holy water), monks' cells, a baptistry and the numerous churches are precious symbols of the marriage between Egyptian and European architecture.

Photo © German Archaeological Institute, Cairo

Photo © André Martin, Paris

Photo © Luc Joubert, Paris

## Archaeological site of Carthage, Tunisia ■

Its green hills, ochre cliffs and golden beaches all basking in the sunlight of the magnificent bay, the archaeological site of Carthage (left), now a protected area, is slowly yielding its hidden treasure. Surrounded by gardens, the great houses built for eighteenth-century Tunisian nobles seem still under the protective influence of the sanctuaries created in the Middle Ages by the warrior-mystics of Islam. By the water's edge, scattered here and there among the modern villas, or in the middle of the corn-fields, is all that remains of a great city, once the capital of the Roman province known as Africa. Further away in time—and deeper underfoot—lie the ashes of the capital of the Carthaginian Empire. Like a breeze from the sea, the spirit of the fabled princess Dido, who came here 2,600 years ago from Tyre in Lebanon to found her "new town", Kart Hadasht, moves quietly among the ruins. Above, lamp in the form of a frog and the head of a god dates back to the early third century BC.

Photo © Jacques Perez, Tunis

## The Medina of Tunis, Tunisia □

Not far from Carthage, and at least as ancient, Tunis was an obscure little town on the hills within the lagoon when Hassan ibn an-Nu'man furnished it with an arsenal, a harbour and a mosque in the eighth century. The mosque, known as the mosque of the olive-tree (az-Zaytunah), later housed a celebrated university, while the arsenal and the harbour pointed the way to Tunis's fortunes in trade and warfare. The city became the capital of Afriqiyah (Tunisia) in the twelfth century, and later, before and after the Turkish-Spanish wars of the sixteenth century, won a reputation as one of the wealthiest cities in the Islamic world; today, remarkably well preserved, it remains one of the most welcoming. The Medina and its two suburbs are havens of tranquillity and unostentatious beauty (left) in the heart of the modern metropolis. Most of the religious buildings and patrician houses there still bustle with life, like the shopping streets that have been the headquarters of the guilds since the thirteenth century. The Tunisian authorities are committed to preserving the city's historical monuments, which run into hundreds. Above all, they wish to safeguard the Medina, which is itself a monument in its entirety.

Photo B. Brake © Rapho, Paris

## Amphitheatre of El-Djem, Tunisia ●

Some ancient cities are particularly tantalizing because they are virtually unmentioned in written sources. One of these mysterious places is Thysdrus, in the Tunisian Sahel, on the site of the modern village of el-Djem. The wonderful mosaic floors which are all that remains of its villas tell of the prosperity of Thysdrus in the third century AD but say little of the origin of its wealth, nor why its citizens built an amphitheatre which could hold an audience of 35,000. It is now one of the best preserved amphitheatres in the world, although after serving for games during the Roman era it was put to a variety of uses: as a stronghold by the Byzantines, and as a refuge for local tribes when they rebelled against the government, twice being attacked with cannon by the Bey's troops. Some of the vaults, stairways and pillars of the façade were recently restored. But despite the breaches made by cannonballs most of the walls of the podium, the arena, the underground galleries, the tiers of Corinthian-style arcades and the substructure of the seats have survived the centuries unscathed.

## The Madara Rider, Bulgaria ■

The exploits of the earliest Bulgarian nomad tribes, which came from the eastern steppes to settle in the Balkan territories of the Byzantine empire, are gloriously commemorated in Madara, a village in eastern Bulgaria. In the sheer rock of the Madara plateau, twenty metres up from the base of the cliff, an unknown sculptor carved a monument to the victory of his sovereign or clan. It represents a horseman, almost life size, with a dog running behind him. The horse is trampling on a lion. The bas-relief has parallels in Iran and the ancient provinces of the Persian or Parthian empires, but is unique in Europe. It dates from the eighth century, and bears Greek inscriptions that refer to events that took place at the time of the Bulgarian Khans Tervel, Kormisos and Omurtag (705-831). The bas-relief has survived intact from those far-off times, but is being affected by the mould, lichens and bacteria that live on the rock. It has been decided to provide the Rider with a removable protective covering.

Photos © Vasil Eftimov, Sofia, Bulgarian National Institute for Cultural Monuments

## The rock-hewn churches of Ivanovo, Bulgaria □

During the Thracian and Roman periods, people lived in the caves alongside the Rusenski Lom river near the village of Ivanovo in north-eastern Bulgaria. At the end of the twelfth century, on the initiative of Joachim I, the first Bulgarian patriarch, monks hewed out cells, chapels and churches in the rock and connected them with a network of galleries and wooden arcades. Work continued until 1396, and gradually almost all the churches and chapels were decorated with wall paintings. Tsarkvata Church, whose decoration dates from the fourteenth century, is particularly remarkable. The anonymous painter of its frescoes departed from the canons of Byzantine iconography, and in his treatment of the nude, of landscape, and of the architectural background in his compositions he showed close ties with expressive Hellenistic art. The conservation of these works on their fragile and fissured rock support presents problems requiring complex study and research. Left, frescoes in Ivanovo church.

Photo © Vasil Eftimov, Sofia, Bulgarian National Institute for Cultural Monuments.

◄ **The Thracian Tomb of Kazanlak, Bulgaria ●**

The Thracians, who in ancient times occupied what is today Bulgaria (as well as part of Turkey) were renowned among their neighbours and kinsmen, the Greeks, for the skill of their goldsmiths, the excellence of their musicians, and the strength of their religious inspiration—the cult of Dionysus and the myth of Orpheus came from Thrace. Numerous richly adorned tombs now gradually being excavated also illustrate their originality as painters. One of the best preserved is a fourth-century-BC tomb discovered by chance in 1944 near Kazanlak in the department of Stara Zagora. Built of brick, it comprises a burial chamber 3.25 metres in diameter of bee-hive shape with a corbelled dome, and a corridor *(dromos)* roofed with a pseudo-vault. The tomb's most remarkable feature is the fresco decoration in the corridor and the burial chamber. Two bands of frescoes are painted in the passage, averaging about two metres in length and thirty centimetres in width. The frescoes in the burial chamber embellish the plinth, the entablature, and the upper part of the dome (photo). The paintings were brilliantly executed using two methods, distemper and fresco proper. The most interesting fresco in the tomb, the "funeral banquet", alone deserves to be regarded as an important landmark in the history of painting.

▲ **The Boyana Church, Bulgaria ○**

In the former village of Boyana, today part of the suburbs of Sofia, stands one of Bulgaria's most impressive historical monuments, a complex of three churches which, although they differ in style and period, form a harmonious architectural unit. Each of them has a Greek cross ground-plan with dome, and richly decorated façades. The Eastern church dates from the tenth and eleventh centuries, and symbolizes the emergence of a nation which, through its close contacts with the merchant cities of the Adriatic, would produce outstanding achievements in commerce, intellectual life and the arts. The Western church, built in the nineteenth century, marks Bulgaria's awakening after a long period of foreign occupation. In the centre is the so-called "Kaloyan" church, dating from about 1250 AD. It might be expected to reflect the feudal anarchy and decadence which set in after the disastrous Tatar invasion, ten years earlier, but its frescoes, completed by an unknown artist in 1259, are both lively and serene. They display a realism which suggests local folk-art rather than the refinement of Byzantium. The life-like attitudes and highly individualized expressions of the figures, whether in portraits of the church's benefactors, in the scene of the Last Supper or in the treatment of venerated icons, are bathed in a vibrant spirituality.

## The Palace and Park of Versailles, France ■

The Palace of Versailles was to all intents and purposes the capital of France from the end of the seventeenth century until the Revolution. It lies at the heart of a vast pattern of lawns, walks and fountains, forming an ensemble which slowly took shape over more than a century and a half. Every inch of it was dedicated to the glory of the King. To appreciate the setting fully, the visitor should approach the Palace from the town of Versailles along one of the avenues which run beside the immense stables and converge on the Court of Honour. With no less than 216 rooms (not all yet restored) the Palace is a world whose brilliance dazzles millions of tourists each year just as it did the courtiers of an earlier age. Outside are the gardens, the celebrated fountains and the two smaller palaces, the Trianons. Louis XIV employed the finest artists of his time: the architect Le Vau, the decorator Lebrun, and the garden designer Le Nôtre. The list of those who have conferred beauty on Versailles is still growing, and now includes the wonderfully gifted craftsmen who recently completed the restoration of the Royal Bedchamber and the Hall of Mirrors. Below, west façade of the Palace.

Photo Jean Feuillie © Archives Photographiques S.P.A.D.E.M., Paris

## Mont-Saint-Michel and its Bay, France □

Its site, its architecture and the continuity of its history have earned for the Mont-Saint-Michel the description of "Wonder of the West". In ancient times this rocky islet off the Normandy coast was a Celtic place of worship. Then, in the eighth century, an oratory dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel was established there, later succeeded by an abbey. The full glory of Mont-Saint-Michel came with the Gothic age when the influx of pilgrims was such that the monks constructed bigger and higher buildings resting on powerful buttresses. This was the origin of the five great rooms crowned by a cloister which were built on the northern side between 1211 and 1228 and are known as La Merveille. Later the fortunes of Mont-Saint-Michel went into steep decline: the church was partially demolished and the abbey was transformed into a prison. In the last 100 years restoration has brought back splendour to this monument which is not only a major tourist attraction but is once again a place of prayer: on the occasion of its millennium in 1966, Benedictine monks were resettled in the abbey.

Photo Georg Gerster © Rapho, Paris

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## Decorated Grottoes of the Vézère Valley, France ◇

Beneath wooded cliffs, the Vézère river winds its way through the historic French provinces of the Limousin and the Périgord. Over 100,000 years ago prehistoric men settled in this river valley in rock shelters where subterranean streams had hollowed out caves. Here, until the New Stone Age, they lived from hunting, fishing and gathering. In the last 100 years, chance discoveries and scientifically organized excavations have brought to light a rich harvest of remains from this civilization. Some 150 deposits studied so far have already yielded over 500,000 flint tools, and fossilized remains (the skeletons of Cro-Magnon man) which have enabled specialists to establish with greater precision the chronology of the Old Stone Age. A landmark in our scientific knowledge of the past, the Vézère grottoes also owe their universal value to the masterpieces engraved (as at Les Combarelles) or painted (as at Lascaux and Fond-de-Gaume) on their walls, which shed a new light on the origins of art. Above, horse painted on the cave wall at Lascaux.

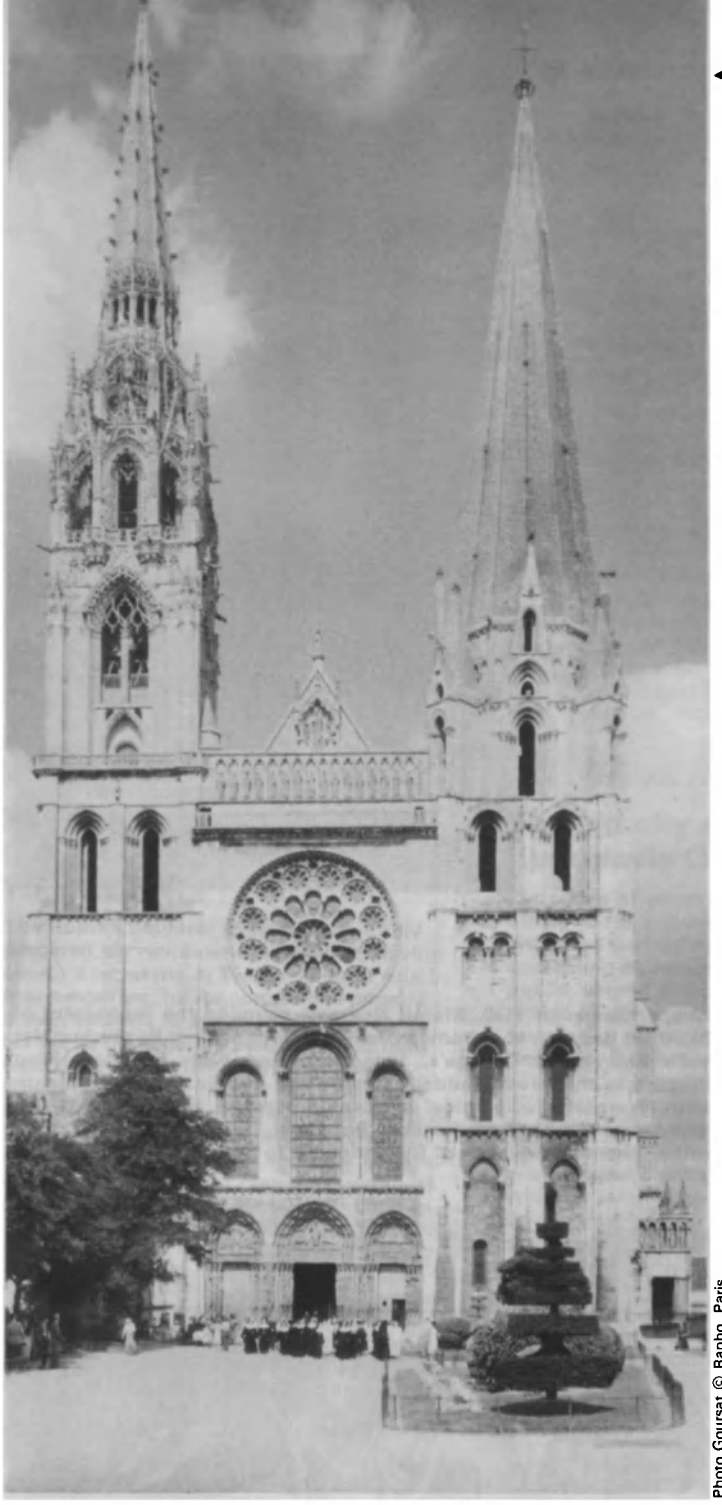


Photo Goursat © Rapho, Paris

## ◄ Chartres Cathedral, France ●

Built on a site already dedicated to the worship of the Virgin Mary, the Cathedral of Chartres is one of the glories of Gothic art. An earlier cathedral was almost totally destroyed by fire in 1194. All that remains of it are parts of the crypt and most of the west front with its Royal Portal, whose statue-columns prefigure the Gothic style. The rest dates from the thirteenth century. The cathedral was rebuilt so quickly that it has a unity of style which is rare in medieval buildings of its size; the nave was completed in 1220, the choir in the following year, the transept and its two porches in 1245. The edifice is remarkable for the great boldness of its architectural conception: it constitutes one of the first examples of the use of outside flying buttresses to bear the thrust of the vaults, thus making possible the construction of great windows and a profusion of stained glass. The 173 windows which have survived, all put in place before 1250, cover more than 2,000 square metres, and constitute the biggest collection of early thirteenth-century stained glass. Today they are severely affected by glass disease. The "International Stained Glass Centre" recently established at Chartres should help to provide the patient skills needed to save these unique treasures.

## Vézelay church and hill, France ○ ►

At Vézelay, on a hill overlooking a peaceful valley, stands one of the great achievements of Romanesque art. Around the middle of the ninth century a monastery was founded there which became a great centre of pilgrimage and grew in size and importance soon after the year 1000 when it acquired the relics of a venerated saint. Vézelay was also the starting point of one of the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela in Spain and it was there, in 1146, that St. Bernard of Clairvaux preached the Second Crusade in the presence of King Louis VII and an immense crowd. The 120-metre long monastic church comprises a Romanesque nave and narthex (1120-1190). The interior is remarkable for its unity of style. The majestic sculpture of the portals, the variety and inspiration of the twenty-four capitals make Vézelay a masterpiece of Burgundian Romanesque sculpture. Nevertheless, it came close to disappearing: in 1840 the church was crumbling into ruin when its restoration was put in the hands of a twenty-six-year-old French architect named Viollet-le-Duc, the first commission in his long career as a restorer of medieval architecture. Right, the Christ on the tympanum.

Photo © Archives Photographiques S.P.A.D.E.M., Paris

## The Ohrid Region, Yugoslavia ■

Lake Ohrid in Macedonia (249 km², average depth 145 metres) is one of the oldest lakes in the world. Its warm dark-blue waters, transparent to a depth of at least twenty metres, are drawn mostly from springs and contain living fossils, creatures which have scarcely changed since the tertiary era. Some of its sponges are unique, and along with many species of snail and certain species of fish they constitute an animal life which is considered to be one of the last remnants of the ancient aquatic region of the Eurasian continent before the Ice Age. The lake attracts archaeologists as well as naturalists, since traces of human settlement in the area stretch back without a break to Neolithic times. However, the main feature of Ohrid's historic and aesthetic past was created by the monks who, from the end of the ninth century onwards, built admirably-sited churches, monasteries and schools. Today Ohrid and Struga, towns on the shores of the lake, are as proud of their region's scientific resources as of its architecture, frescoes and icons, and have won a new reputation for their annual festivals of poetry, music and folklore.

Photos © Rapho Paris

## Stari Ras and Sopocani, Yugoslavia ●

From the ninth century onwards, the princes of Serbia defended a clifftop stronghold, Stari Ras, against the assaults of Byzantium and their Eastern neighbours. In the tenth century, they built a church there, the oldest in the region, and dedicated it to St. Peter. In the twelfth century, their fortress, Gradina, became the first capital of an independent Serbian state, and at its foot the town of Trgoviste and two monasteries keep alive the memory of those who fought for independence. In 1170, Stefan Nemanja founded the monastery of Djurdjevi Stupovi, to commemorate a victory against Byzantium. Its main church, St. George's, was decorated with frescoes; King Dragutin's chapel was added later. In the middle of the thirteenth century, a period of political calm and prosperity, King Stefan Uros I founded a second monastery, Sopocani, whose paintings rank among the masterpieces of Byzantine art in the Balkans.

Photos © Toni Schneiders, Bodensee

## Historic Split and Diocletian's Palace, Yugoslavia □

The Roman Emperor Diocletian carefully prepared his retirement. In 305 AD, having set up a tetrarchy or system of joint rule by four emperors, he renounced the imperial crown and left to spend the last years of his life in the gigantic palace he had built near Aspalathos, the Dalmatian village where he was born. Three hundred years later, the inhabitants of the nearby town of Salona, fleeing invaders, sought refuge in the palace, settled there, and built houses, workshops, shops and churches within its precincts. There were many alterations to the architecture over the centuries, but throughout their history the citizens of Aspalathos (later known as Spalato, then Split) succeeded in exploiting the structure of the palace while demolishing as little as possible. They built a harmoniously laid-out city within the great Roman walls, leaving in place the peristyle of the palace, the mausoleum of Diocletian and the temple of Jupiter.

## The old city of Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia ○

Historians of urban planning feel a special affection for Dubrovnik. Its fortified walls enclose a perfectly preserved complex containing buildings, both private and public, sacred and profane, from each period of the city's history since it was founded in the seventh century AD. Another remarkable feature: the city still has in its possession the town-planning documents, decrees and regulations which governed every phase of its expansion. They show how the designs of the planners were followed with a scrupulous fidelity which is rare in the annals of urban development. Their plans brought to squares and streets, residences and even the most humble buildings a grandiose style worthy of a city which was the centre of a distinctive political and territorial organization known as the Republic of Ragusa and which was proud of its freedom and of its trading accomplishments.

## Plitvice Lakes National Park, Yugoslavia ◇

Playing hide-and-seek among limestone and dolomite rock formations, the Korana River in Croatia suddenly pauses to form a chain of some twenty lakes and emerald-green pools. The lakes rise in tiers separated by a staircase of dams crossed by waterfalls that are often over twenty, and in one case eighty metres high. This landscape of stone and water was built by living organisms. Mosses, algae and bacteria have all been incrusted and fossilized by deposits of calcium carbonate: the cave-pitted natural dams between the lakes grow a centimetre higher each year. The Plitvice Lakes are magnificent architecture in movement, in a site held in awe by man from time immemorial. The wooded hills overlooking the water are a refuge for bears and wolves, and for rare birds like the Capercaillie and the Great Horned Owl. Beech, fir and juniper grow in one of Europe's few remaining virgin forests.

Photo © Paul C. Pet, Amsterdam

Photo © Yugoslav Tourist Office

Photo © Royal Norwegian Embassy, Paris

## Bryggen, Norway ■

In the past, the towns of northern Europe were built of wood. One of them has survived on the west coast of Norway. Its name is Bryggen ("The Embankment"), and it was founded in the eleventh century, if not earlier, on the natural harbour of Bergen. Until about 1300, it was mainly owned by members of the old Norwegian trading nobility. Later, at the time of the Hanseatic League, it was gradually taken over by a colony of German merchants, who were themselves ousted in 1754 by "The Norwegian Office", which traded in dried fish. Bryggen had badly deteriorated by the beginning of this century, but life is slowly returning to it through the work of a public foundation which is buying up and restoring buildings, and is carrying out archaeological excavations on the site of the most recent fire to ravage the town, in 1955. Enough of the houses, all wooden gabled buildings with a single or double courtyard and stone *kjellere* ("cellars"), have survived to evoke the austere elegance of Bryggen as it must have looked when last rebuilt, after another fire had destroyed it in 1702.

Photo © Royal Norwegian Embassy, Paris

## Urnes Stave Church, Norway ●

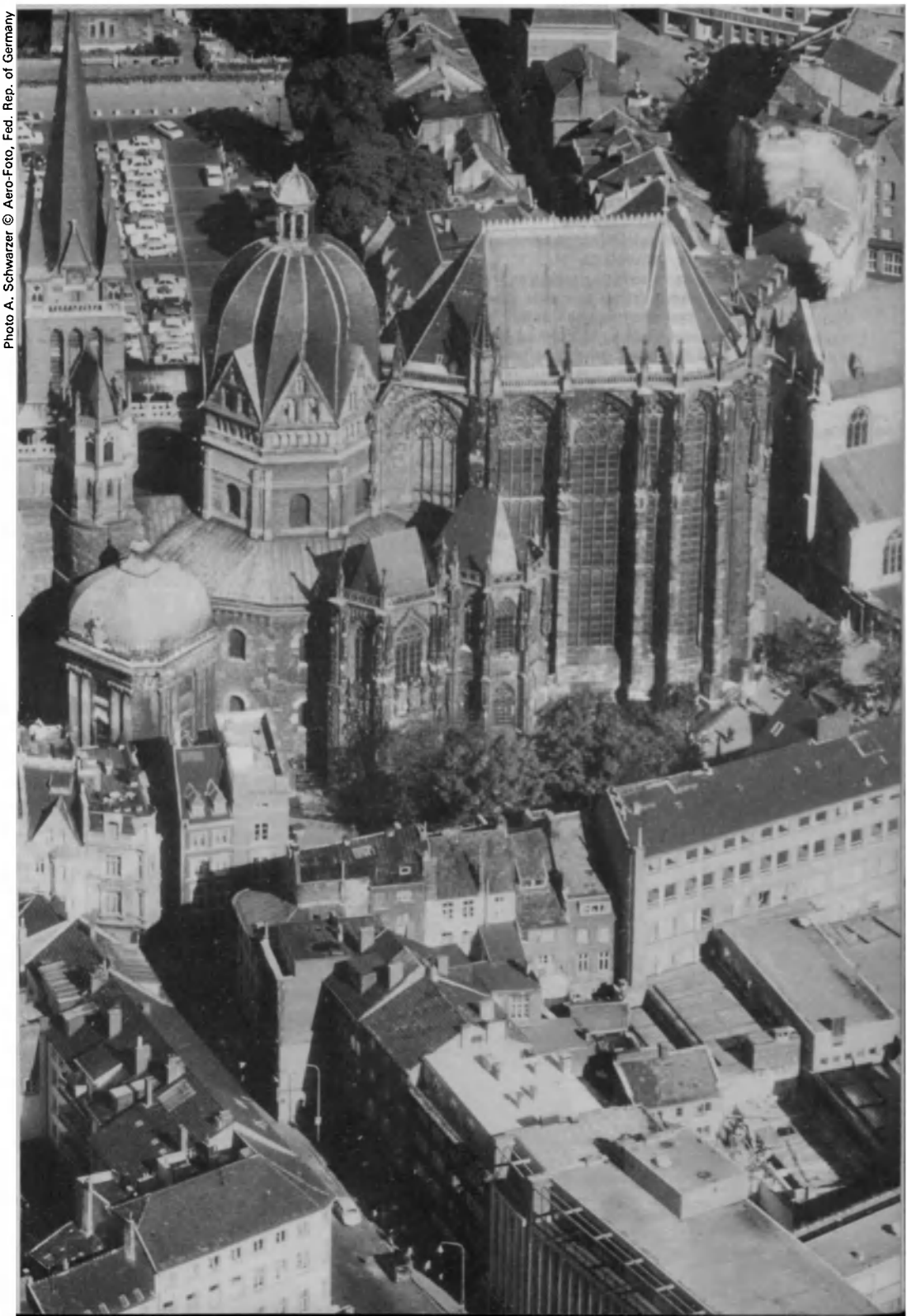
The twelfth-century church at Urnes, in Sogn og Fjordane county, is generally considered to be the finest of Norway's thirty surviving wooden stave churches *(stavkirke)*. The timber in the northern wall of the nave, including the portal carved with interlaced fighting animals, was re-used from a building some 100 years older. Similar carving covers the western gable triangle of the nave, and one of the gables of the choir, which must also be relics of the older building. The medieval furnishings of the church include a wooden Calvary group and two candlesticks of Limoges enamelled bronze. The altarpiece and pulpit, the gallery, choir screen, pews and wall paintings all date from before 1700. The church is as solid as ever as a result of scrupulous maintenance and protective measures against fire, insect parasites and burglary.

Photo © The Camunian Centre for Prehistoric Studies Capo di Ponte, Italy

## Rock Drawings in Valcamonica, Italy □

Systematic investigation during the last two decades has brought to light some 130,000 rock engravings in Valcamonica, a narrow Alpine valley in Lombardy. The most recent date from the beginning of the Christian era; the oldest go back as far as 7000 BC. From the earliest bands of hunters, who depicted the quarry they wished to kill, to the bellicose farmers of later times, who adorned their battle scenes with inscriptions in Etruscan lettering, the creators of the rock carvings set out for decipherment the history of a people during 8,000 years of economic, social, cultural and religious evolution. In the Neolithic age, the first Camunian farmers depicted worship of the sun and of the dead, propitiatory dances, and initiation ceremonies. Later their place was taken by stock breeders, and then traders, who had a more complex economic life and whose carvings feature idols and spirits with prominent eyes. Then came the cult of weapons, the powers of the subconscious, priests and polytheism. The stone engravers of Valcamonica may have been illiterate, but their work is more informative than the written evidence left by many an ancient civilization.

Photo A. Schwarzer © Aero-Foto, Fed. Rep. of Germany



## Aachen Cathedral, the Federal Republic of Germany ○

The schoolchildren of the half-dozen European countries which claim Charlemagne as a figure in their national history learn that his favourite abode was the Frankish city of Aachen (which now lies at the intersection of the borders of the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands). In 790 he began to build next to his castle the Palace Chapel which is today the core of Aachen Cathedral. Its construction, by the man who had unified Western Europe, lent weight to his claim to equality, as the heir of Rome, with the Emperors at Constantinople. The chapel, with its monumental cupola, elegantly combined late Classical and Byzantine architectural elements with new conceptions, and remains the finest symbol of the technical and cultural renaissance engineered by Charlemagne after four hundred years of anarchy and decline. That renaissance is also reflected in the bronzes, ivories and gold treasures in the Cathedral's treasure vault. Charlemagne's tomb, a classical sarcophagus with bas-reliefs depicting the myth of Proserpina, is more than a museum-piece or a historical curiosity. It symbolizes the veneration that has been attached to his name for eleven centuries.

## Wieliczka Salt Mine, Poland ■

The Wieliczka salt mine has been worked since the thirteenth century and is still in operation. Its miners have now reached a depth of 327 metres, and the mine galleries on nine different levels are three hundred kilometres long altogether. At Wieliczka a collection of tools, equipment and machines demonstrates the development of salt mining techniques over 500 years, as well as improvements in safety measures, ventilation and lighting systems, and methods of transporting the salt. Archaeological finds exhibited at the mine reveal that surface deposits were worked as far back as the Neolithic Period. The mine also contains works of art—subterranean chapels hewn from the rock-salt and decorated with salt statues. As far back as the fifteenth century the "Krakow Salina", a highly-organized royal enterprise that was one of Poland's major sources of revenue, was a "tourist attraction". Travellers admired its unusual landscapes and the architectural grandeur of the excavations in these mines which are now a museum of technical ingenuity and a monument to human effort.

Photo Erich Lessing © Magnum, Paris

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# Wonders of the world

**by Georges Fradier**

## Cracow's historical and architectural urban centre, Poland □

**Trees have replaced the ramparts, except to the north where walls, towers and barbicans still stand. Otherwise, Cracow is still as its planners designed it in 1257. On the huge market square in the centre (above) stand buildings that symbolize three powers of the city: the tower of the Gothic Town Hall, the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption, and the Cloth Hall. This exemplary model of town-planning is being matched today by a conservation plan which covers the whole of the ancient capital, as well as the town of Kazimierz, on the other side of the River Vistula, which was absorbed into the municipality long ago. Between these neighbourhoods, where dozens of monasteries cluster round Cracow University (founded 1364, the second oldest in central Europe after Prague), rises Wawel Hill and its two imposing monuments, the Royal Castle and the Cathedral. They contain valuable works of Polish art that have escaped the pillaging of the centuries. In the castle, originally of Gothic design but transformed into a Renaissance palace at the beginning of the sixteenth century, is a famous series of tapestries which were executed in Brussels around 1560 on the instructions of King Sigismund II Augustus. Among the many priceless objects in the cathedral, whose Gothic vaults house the sepulchres of kings and queens, is the so-called lance of Saint Maurice, which the Holy Roman emperor Otto III gave to Boleslav the Valiant in 1000 AD.**

## The Bialowieza National Park, Poland ●

**In 1919, the European bison vanished from the great Polish forest. Today herds of these powerful animals have been reconstituted and roam freely in the Bialowieza National Park. Like the hardy tarpan wild horses, which have also been saved from extinction, the bison were part of the original fauna of the Bialowieza forest which lies on the watershed between the catchment areas of the Baltic and Black Seas, and is one of the oldest expanses of natural lowland woods in Europe. Some 700 species of vascular plants are found in the Park, and twenty-three species of broad-leaved and coniferous trees. As for animal life, in addition to bison and horses, fifty-four species of mammals and 200 species of birds find sanctuary there.**

AT first sight it is bewildering, this list of fifty-seven wonders of the world (not that it is closed: in a few years time it will have swollen to—who knows?—a hundred, a thousand and one). When contemplating these masterpieces proposed by twenty-odd States one is, momentarily, perplexed. "Here are the most authentic, the most individual things we possess", one can almost hear the representatives of each State presenting their case. So are we looking at a cavalcade of each nation's history, a panoply of symbols of its "cultural identity"?

A people's awareness of its birthright does not come about by accident. However puerile it may be, patriotic drum-beating about a nation's architecture, exploits, inventions or philosophy, nonetheless presupposes some kind of education and publicity. How can you talk to people about a historic monument if they have no idea about history and are blind to architecture? So let us welcome the teaching of national history, the advance of education, the work of the media.

In a sense, then, the World Heritage Convention is a reflection of the state of national cultures in the late twentieth century.

But it is much more than that; unlike many a diplomatic treaty, it is ahead of its time. For the property it presents to us is considered to be *of universal value*. Now what civilization has ever acknowledged that areas of national territory, or objects of every possible origin and form can possess a "universal" value? (True, the ancient Greeks drew up a list of Seven Wonders of the World. But what a small world it was! Five of the seven had been built by the Greeks themselves, six were products of their own times. The Egyptian pyramids were the only exception; they were already 1,500 years old and are, incidentally, the only wonder to have survived). How justified is the proposition that monuments and sites admired in one country should command admiration in all the rest—in other words that the whole of humanity now has a common heritage?

In the case of natural property the idea is not too hard to accept. The world's biological reserves are of concern to everyone on earth. The great ecosystems know no frontiers, and there is something faintly ludicrous about "national"

ownership of geological phenomena. Everyone feels that "the beauties of nature" should be shared or respected by all human beings precisely because they were not made by human hand. As for man's own works, it requires little imagination to realize that we are all heirs to the treasures of human knowledge and thought. The trouble is that we are dealing here not with abstractions but with tangible, immovable things: buildings firmly established on a plot of land, inseparable from a landscape, built by the sons of that particular piece of soil acting in accordance with their own specific aims and standards.

The list urges us to appreciate the universal value of the temples of Abu Simbel and those of Tikal. Mont Saint-Michel and its bay are included as being capable of stirring the emotions of people all over the world. And why not? One hundred and fifty years ago, this monastery on a desolate wave-swept rock was used as a prison, it was a miniature Gothic Alcatraz. Presumably, the French authorities of the day attached no value to it except as a penitentiary. But today the Mont Saint-Michel is presented to us as a "wonder" in the fullest sense. And everyone is bound to agree, provided that he or she *sees* the place, can *experience* a sense of wonder at it, is interested in medieval Christianity, twelfth-century European architecture, and the glint of wet sand.

At any rate, this is what the World Heritage Convention implies. History has begun to take on a human face. Exchanges take place in a spirit of equality which shatters national self-centredness and disturbs us as we smugly contemplate "our" monuments, the inimitable repositories of "our" values. Here, "in the same bag", we have Aachen and Isfahan, the age of Charlemagne and that of Abbas I, Quito and Dubrovnik, Cairo and Kathmandu, because it is seemingly accepted that the Swedes (among others) will see Isfahan like the Iranians, and that the Iranians (among others) will see Kathmandu like the Nepalese.

Far from being backward-looking, the Heritage Convention seems to be prophetic. But there is one point where States party to it make a particularly striking innovation. They pledge to *preserve* the cultural and natural property on their inventory. Each State "recognizes that the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the heritage...belongs primarily to that State". Such an obligation is quite without precedent!

For we are talking about a heritage, a legacy: old towns and ancient monuments. People think that we have inherited this legacy from our ancestors to whom it was bequeathed by their own forebears and who religiously preserved it with us in mind. But this is simply not true, except for a few items on the list. National parks are fairly recent creations and have obviously been protected ever since they were established. Previously, their contents needed less protection because they were further from the reach of interference by our forefathers. In addition, certain buildings have been deliberately bequeathed to us: royal palaces, which now belong to the "nation" or the "people", churches, mosques and temples which are still in use. But all the other property on the list is there by chance—or through the tireless efforts of archaeologists who reconstruct ruins and are still today rescuing monuments from the jungle, from the earth, from oblivion.

Governments now make it their business to restore cultural monuments, and sometimes the general public rallies to the defence of buildings which have survived from their past. The reasons for this about-turn in public opinion are well known. The adoption of the Heritage Convention coincided with mounting concern about the deterioration of the environment, the exhaustion of natural resources, and the stultifying monotony of much international architecture. In more than one town and city the authorities actually began *to stop demolishing*. A few voices crying in the wilderness had already insisted on the value of buildings and quarters that had miraculously survived the centuries. Suddenly their cries were being echoed by millions of people. These buildings were seen to be remarkable by any standards, not just objects of nostalgic regard. Each one is unique and therefore irreplaceable.

These treasures are not only beyond price, they are terrifyingly fragile. They need the kind of protection they have never been given; they could not survive a few more years of neglect. Natural parks are equally vulnerable: a few concessions to the motorway planners, hotel chains or promoters of big game hunting would make short work of them. Protection is becoming a permanent duty. The States party to the Convention perform this duty all the more effectively because public opinion is not only behind them but often ahead. We have decided to remove from present or future dangers the little we have salvaged from the past. In the way of "immovable" property we have nothing better to transmit to them.

So far none of the cultural property on the Heritage List (with one exception which I will mention shortly) is less than two hundred years old. Let us hope that the twentieth century will be fittingly represented one day. But how? By which piece of architecture of universal value? And which monument capable of being preserved, in an age when buildings are designed to last until their cost has been recovered? Which steel tower, Olympic monument or nuclear power station will be regarded as unique and irreplaceable?

And now for the exception, the one twentieth-century monument already on the list. Its name, Auschwitz-Birkenau, is that of two localities in Poland. It is the most hideous compound imaginable, a fitting site for a place which saw human absurdity reveal its fullest scope for crime in its most rational and clinical form. Between 1940 and 1944 Hitler's henchmen packed the camp with starving deportees from twenty-four countries to provide slave labour. In those years they slaughtered four million men, women and children. The remains of some of them—spectacles, teeth, hair and fabric made from hair — have been preserved, with various instruments of torture, in the Auschwitz "museum". The Polish Government, which has turned Auschwitz into a Monument to the Martyrs, has created a zone of silence stretching one kilometre round the camp.

To this camp of horror should we not add another group of buildings which, behind the elegance of their eighteenth-century façades, conceal a sinister reality? This is the Island of Gorée, off the coast of Senegal near Dakar, where for centuries millions of black slaves—men, women and children—were confined before being transported to the Antilles. The prosperity of Gorée lasted for a long time, as long as the traffic in "ebony wood". Today the deserted "slaveries" have been eroded by time and salt. The Senegalese Government wishes to transform this symbol of the suffering of an entire people into a place of dialogue, a shrine of reconciliation. Once restored, Gorée will house a centre of studies on the black diaspora, a conference centre, and a history museum.

The members of the World Heritage Committee deserve our gratitude for having selected these two monuments. In so doing they have given us a clearer understanding of the extent to which the notion of the natural and cultural heritage not only includes but goes beyond aesthetic and scientific criteria. The world heritage mirrors the world. Its natural glories possess a value we cherish because they are untouched by human hand, except by the hand which seeks to preserve them. The value of the cultural heritage lies in the quality of the work through which artists and builders have expressed the civilizations to which they belonged. But there is also a moral value: it is for us to ensure that, tomorrow, the worst no longer rubs shoulders with the best.

■ **Georges Fradier**

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**GEORGES FRADIER,** *French novelist and essayist, was for many years a member of Unesco's staff, latterly as Director of the Division of Human Settlements and Socio-Cultural Environment. His published works include* Encounters and Celebrations *(1963) and* About the Quality of Life *(1976) published by Unesco.*

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The Island of Gorée, the former slave-trade centre, off the coast of Senegal. Above, the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp.



BRODARD GRAPHIQUE. COULOMMIERS — Dépôt légal C 1 — Août 1980 — IMPRIMÉ EN FRANCE *(Printed in France).* Commission paritaire N° 27.253.

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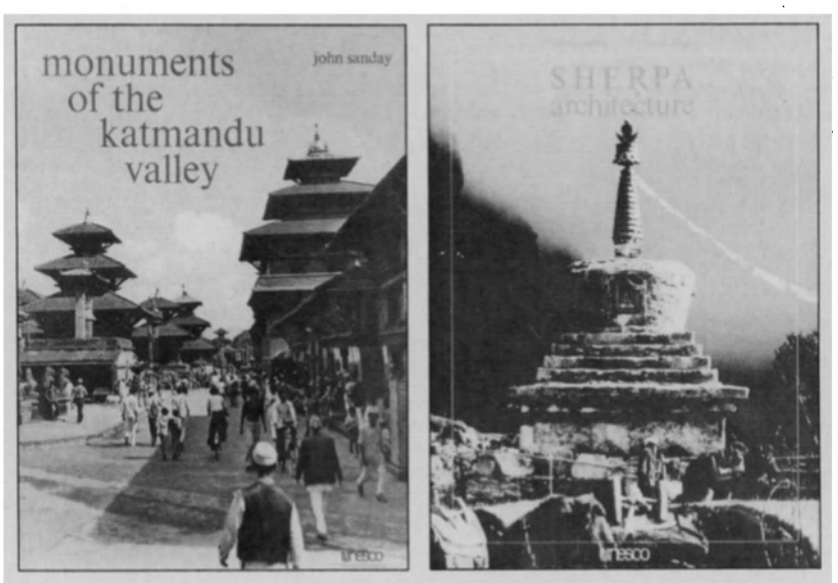


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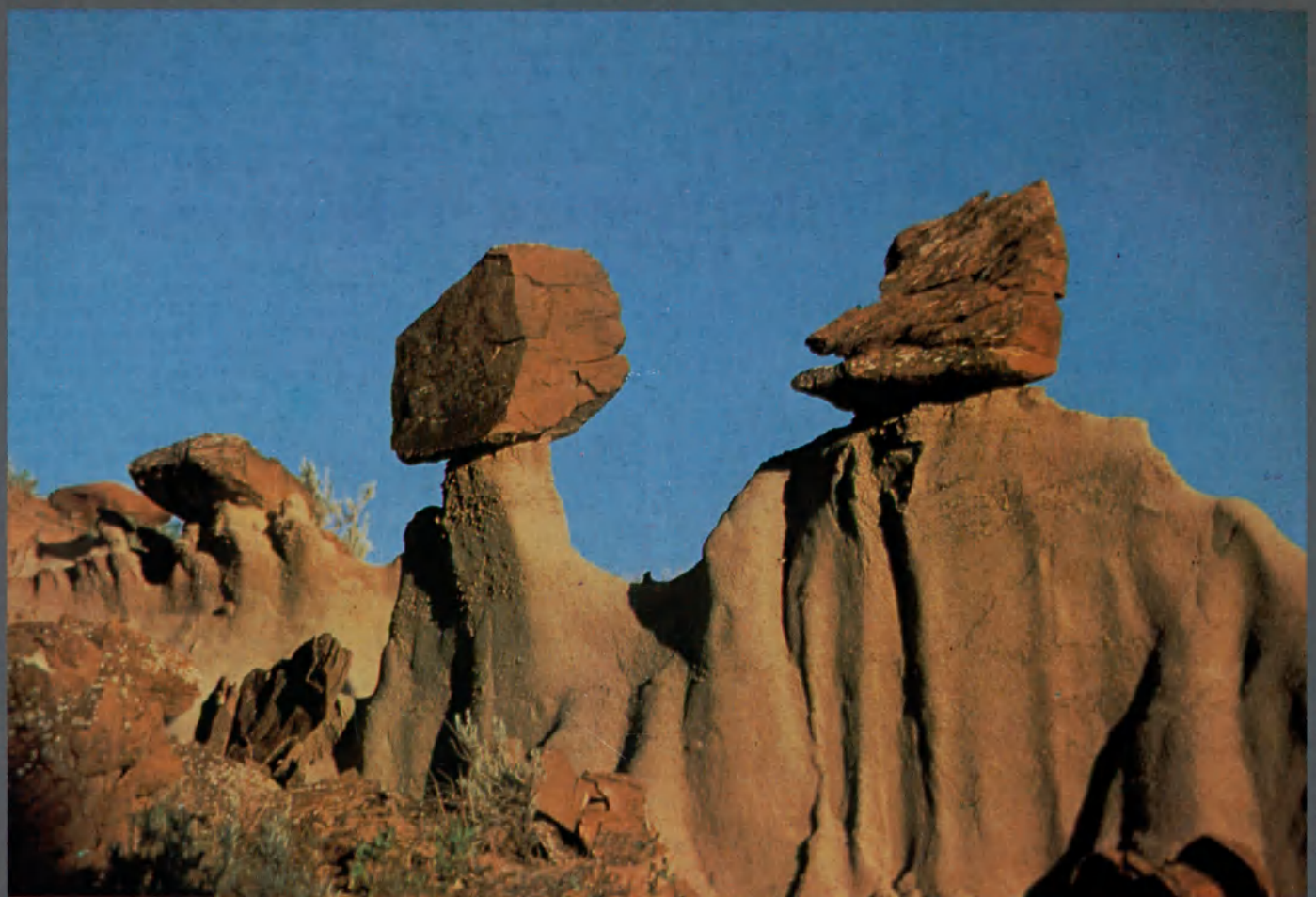

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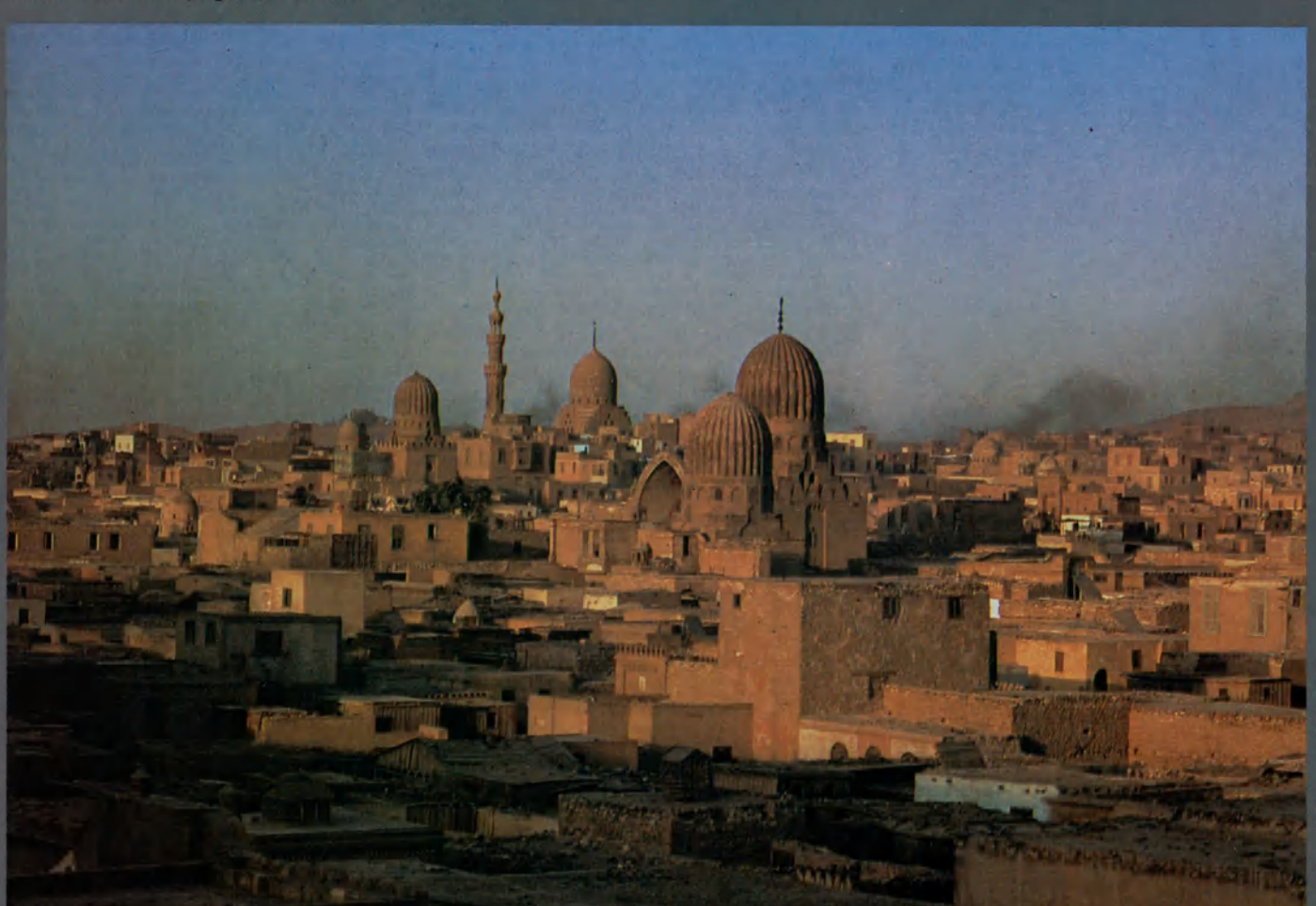
Nature weathered the curious rock formations in Dinosaur Provincial Park, Canada (above). The hand of man shaped the historic centre of Islamic Cairo (below). Under an international Convention which breaks new ground in linking together the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage, each of these sites has been included on a list of irreplaceable cultural and natural properties "of outstanding universal value" (see also pages 13 and 20).



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